DONALD ROSS

PIONEER EVANGELIST

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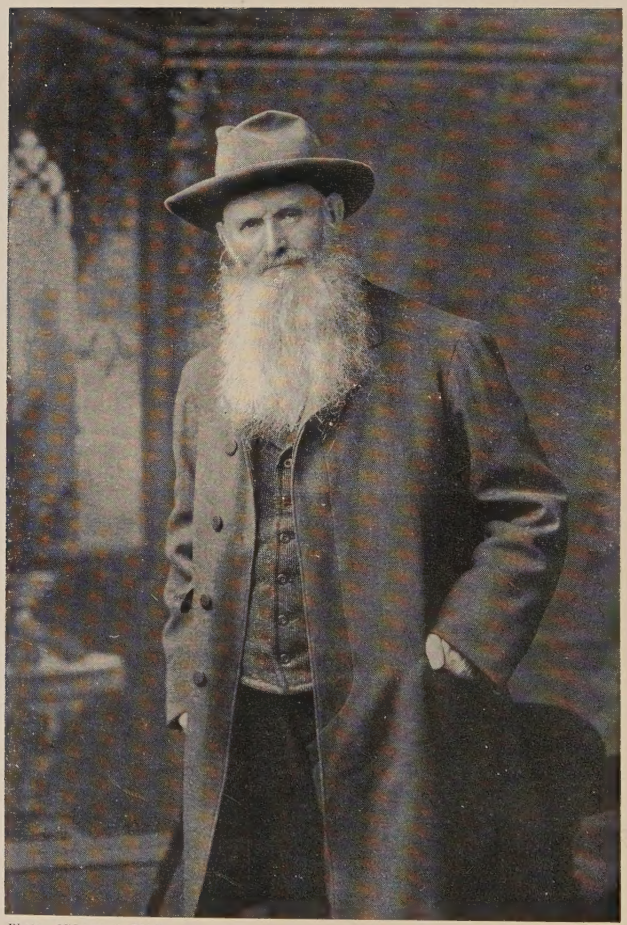

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I remain yours truly

Donald Ross

FACSIMILE OF HIS LAST SIGNATURE.

DONALD ROSS,

PIONEER EVANGELIST OF THE
NORTH OF SCOTLAND AND
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

EDITED BY HIS SON,

C. W. R.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

Introduction - - - - - - - - - 9

Memoir. By CHARLES W. ROSS.

EARLY DAYS - - - - - - - - 11
HIS CONVERSION - - - - - - - 17
PREPARATION AND CALL TO SERVICE - - 28
IN LABOURS ABUNDANT - - - - - - 37
DIVINE LEADING AND HUMAN OPPOSITION - 43
SOJOURN AND WORK IN EDINBURGH - - 57
LABOURS IN AMERICA - - - - - 66
CLOSING DAYS AND REST WITH CHRIST - 74

Letters - - - - - - - - - - - 77

Reminiscences of Fellow-Labourers.

1. DONALD MUNRO, TORONTO - - - 98
2. JOHN SMITH, CLEVELAND - - - - 126
3. JOHN GILL, BOSTON - - - - - 129

Footdee Recollections.

By G. R. MASSON, A. AND D. FOWLER, &C.

THE NORTH-EAST COAST MISSION - - - 135
REVIVALS OF 1861, 1862, 1869 - - - 137-144
REMARKABLE CONVERSIONS - - - - 144

Work in the City of Aberdeen.

GEORGE SHIVAS, ABERDEEN - - - - 147
JOHN MARTIN, CANADA - - - - - 150

Revival Times and Work in Aberdeenshire.

By JOHN RITCHIE, KILMARNOCK.

AWAKENING IN INVERURIE - - - - 155
WHAT DID THE EVANGELISTS PREACH? - - 159
OPPOSITION OF THE MINISTERS - - - 161
"THE NEW PROPHETS" - - - - - 162
"SQUEEZED OUT" FROM THE CHURCHES - 166
OUTSIDE THE CAMP - - - - - 168
GATHERING UNTO THE NAME OF THE LORD - 173
THE FIRST CONFERENCE - - - - - 174

Work in Aberdeenshire—*continued.* PAGE

PIONEERING "THE VILLAGES" - - - 177
LAST VISITS AND HOME TO HEAVEN - - 183

Work in Buchan.

JOHN DAVIDSON, GOWANWELL - - - - 185
MRS. DAVIDSON, GOWANWELL - - - - 187
ALEXANDER IRONSIDE, NEW DEER - - - 190

Work in the Garioch District.

GEORGE TAYLOR, OYNE - - - - - 192
JOHN SCOTT, PITCAPLE - - - - - 196
GEORGE ADAM, KENNETHMONT - - - 198
MRS. NAIRN, RHYNIE - - - - - 199

Speyside Recollections.

MRS. INNES, NETHERTON - - - - 202
CHARLES MORRISON, ABERLOUR - - - 204
ROBERT DUNBAR, CRAIGELLACHIE - - - 207

Forfar and Kirriemuir Recollections.

MRS. HARKINS - - - - - - 209

A Striking Incident. JAMES MURRAY. - - - 211
"There will be more than one Donald Ross in Heaven."

Work in the United States.

FIRST CAMPAIGN IN CHICAGO.
CALEB J. BAKER - - - - - 215
VISITS TO THE PACIFIC COAST.
WM. L. FAULKNOR - - - - - 227

Canadian Reminiscences.

HAMILTON, GALT, AND CLYDE.
T. D. W. MUIR, DETROIT - - - - 229
MANITOBA AND THE NORTH-WEST.
JOHN RAE, BRANDON - - - - 234

Closing Days in Savannah.

LAST LABOURS IN THE GOSPEL.
LOUIS STEVEN - - - - - - 236

Echoes from the Borderland - - - - - 240

In Memoriam. M. M. DAVIS - - - - - 243

Weighty Words and Pithy Sayings - - - 245

INTRODUCTION.

In Hebrews xiii. 7, we are exhorted as follows:—"REMEMBER them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the Word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith" (R.V.). This passage evidently refers to those leaders who had finished their course, and were now away from the scene of their conflict, and at rest with Christ, which is far better. Their memories are to be cherished and their faith imitated. It is to enable the people of the Lord to-day to carry this out concerning the subject of this Memoir that these papers are published. No attempt has been made to write a biography of the conventional kind, but the end sought has been to present a picture of him as the Lord's servant that will help to preserve him in the hearts and memories of the people of God.

He was himself much averse to biographies, and frequently remarked that the only trustworthy historian was the Spirit of God, who alone could select what was worth preserving in the lives of any, whether for our warning or encouragement. This has been felt in preparing this Memoir, and, consequently, we have sought wisdom to winnow out from the mass of material all that would not tend to real and lasting profit.

The form of the book is the result of circumstances rather than the fruit of design. Mr. Ritchie had gathered a number of papers together, intending to issue them as a tribute of affection and esteem, expecting that a complete biography would be published afterwards. But two books we deemed inexpedient, so, at our suggestion, he withheld his papers from the press, and now they are published here together with the others. We did not think it well to seek to make a continuous narrative out of the contributions sent by friends, but rather fell in with the form already given to the work by Mr. Ritchie, and so each paper stands by itself. Our own contribution is a mere outline of his life, and the others fill in details, it seems to us, in such a way as to give as a whole a fairly complete picture of himself and his ministry.

And may our gracious God use all for His glory.

C. W. R.

MEMOIR OF DONALD ROSS.

Early Days.

"The nurture and admonition of the Lord."—Eph. vi. 4.

THE subject of this memoir, Donald Ross, was born in the parish of Alness, Ross-shire, Scotland, on February 11th, 1824.*

The century in which he was born is a memorable one. The extraordinary activity of the human mind, leading to great advances in all sciences and arts, and the general progress in knowledge along every avenue open to man, have given it a very distinct and remarkable character. But, besides these triumphs of the human intellect, the century will stand out prominently in connection with great religious movements, telling of the energy and activity of the unseen powers. In the beginning of the century, things, religiously, were very quiet indeed in Scotland. Our father's description, written some years ago, gives a picture that is interesting when compared with the scenes that later on were enacted in almost every parish in Scotland—scenes of blessing and times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. He says:

* In the first notices of his home-call, his age was given as eighty-one. This is a mistake, as we have discovered since.

"In the old Established Church of Scotland there were good and bad men; but, generally speaking, DEATH PREVAILED. The ecclesiastical system was this:—The whole country was divided into parishes, and a stipend or salary, a manse and a glebe or small farm secured by Act of Parliament for the preacher in each parish. This led to young men getting educated and a licence to preach the Gospel in order to make a comfortable living. After they had secured a parish, they usually settled down as citizens to have a life of leisure and the comforts of a home. As might be expected in these circumstances, the care of souls or salvation of the lost was not the paramount pursuit of those men. With the preaching, or rather reading, of one or two poor sermons on the Sunday, the minister was supposed to have properly accomplished his work. There were few or no conversions, and the people in poor circumstances were forgotten or overlooked."

But over this scene of darkness and death the Spirit of God was brooding; and, just as in creation He caused light to shine out of darkness, and life to be where death had prevailed, so now He purposed to move in this scene, and make it one of unparalleled energy in the work of God. But He must first prepare His instruments—the vessels whom He will use to hold and distribute His manifold grace. One of these vessels was our dear father; and him He found where He has often found fit instruments for His work—in a godly home. How many times it has occurred that

the home was the only place where the light was kept burning. Even when the public body, whether Israel or the Church had utterly failed, the Spirit of God could find in some home the light brightly shining, and out of that home He could select His instrument for His work. We read of the unfeigned faith of the grandmother Lois and the mother Eunice reappearing in the son Timothy. So it was with our father. We think it well to give some details as to this, because it was of so much importance in his eyes. No one more earnestly than he contended against the fallacy that a godly parent guaranteed a godly seed; but none was more jealous of the maintenance of godliness in the home, in its bearing on the children, as the very backbone of strength to the Church of God. He ever spoke with reverence and thankfulness of his own home, and urged continually the responsibility of Christian parents in this matter. He deplored the abandonment of the habit of family reading, and felt that when that was gone, all barriers to the advance of apostasy were gone too.

His brother, the Rev. Walter Ross, United Free Church minister in Abernethy, Scotland, writes thus of their parentage and home life:—

"The late evangelist, Donald Ross, had a godly ancestry. His great-grandfather, Duncan Ross, was a farm-tenant in Caithness. He was a man of eminent godliness. His son, the grandfather of the subject of this memoir, was married to a woman as distinguished in piety as any. Her husband, within a

few months of their marriage, had to join, under pressure, the militia or home forces of that day, it being the early part of the Napoleonic war. He left his young wife and home, and never saw either again, dying a few months thereafter. The young wife, thus widowed, gave birth to a son in 1790, the father of the subject of this memoir. His mother was a woman of marked grace, and her child from infancy was dedicated to the Lord, brought up for Him, and trained and educated with a view to His service. When come to age, he was appointed school-teacher in the parish of Alness, having passed an examination in Edinburgh with a view to this work. Soon thereafter he married Grace M'Leod, and a home was established that was characterised by puritanic piety and exemplary godliness. The spirit of the Bible and of the fear of God and reverence for divine things ruled in it, and made its atmosphere sacred. It was a home from which Christian light radiated throughout the district, and to which all who desired Christian counsel and guidance repaired. The Name, the Book, the Day, the Cause, and the People of God were held in it in supreme esteem. Instruction from the Bible and the Shorter Catechism was thoroughly inculcated. The Sabbath evenings, after coming home from church, were uniformly spent by those who had been to church in repeating the substance of the services, giving the texts and the heads of the sermon, and recalling and rehearsing notes from it. Then came the Shorter Catechism with its doctrinal teaching, the

exercises closing with the usual family worship, which included singing, reading the Word, and prayer. This was the uniform Sabbath-evening form of exercises; on week-days there was family worship morning and night. The home was a training institute as well as a family circle, and in it was laid the basis of the deep hold and clear knowledge that more than one of its sons got of the truth. The materials were in them ready when the Spirit of life quickened, and all became living light and fire. For years that home continued in this blessed condition; but the Disruption of the Church of Scotland came, and the head of the house identified himself with the seceding element, and because of this lost his post, his glebe, his stipend, his all, and crowned his example and teaching to his children by this sacrifice for the honour of Jesus the King."

We have given the above quotation, because this feature of his early life was deemed of such importance by himself. True it is, as we shall presently relate, he needed more than mere up-bringing after a godly sort, but in his ministry he dwelt much on this responsibility and the blessing attached to it; and as our object is to preserve the salient features of his ministry, we do not hesitate to emphasise this as we do.

Moreover, he not only preached this to others, he acted on it in his own home. What he aimed to secure above everything else in connection with his children was their eternal welfare, and indeed this extended

not only to his children but also to his grandchildren. For every one of them he prayed daily, and not alone prayed, but he left not a stone unturned to have their conversion brought about. His home was ever the resort of the people of God, and particularly of those devoted to His service. They were the excellent of the earth to him, and the whole atmosphere was one heavily charged with eternal things. Worldly ambition could hardly live in such an atmosphere, and besides this, he endeavoured that we should not get away from it when visiting other people or associating with our fellows. Most careful was he about the homes that we visited, and, in short, his endeavour was that we should be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord in the fullest sense. Success in the world he valued lightly, for to him the world was but a doomed scene, out of which he sought to rescue his own as well as others, and he laboured to influence the Lord's people everywhere to think of things in the same way. How many times we have heard him thundering out from the platform when speaking of the danger of Christians running after what the world can give, either for themselves or their children! "Brethren, we are just God's pickings out of this wretched world, and when He has got all His own out of it, He'll burn up the whole concern like so much kindling-wood"! And this was not a mere platform platitude: it was the deep conviction of his soul, attested by his life and walk.

His Conversion.

"Ye must be born again."—John iii. 7.

BUT although our father attached very great importance, as we have already said, to the value of the training at home, he did not for a moment entertain the notion that that of itself was a substitute for conversion. On the contrary, one would sometimes imagine that he regarded home-training as of no moment whatever, as he spoke of his own experience, and quoted in his own inimitable way, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." But this was only the other side of the truth, and emphasised where he saw that home-training or anything else was sought as a refuge from the sweeping words of the Lord, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." How often have we heard him speak of his father's home and the godly atmosphere pervading it, and then his inborn enmity to the things of God, in spite of all the gracious influences with which he was surrounded, just to give point and piquancy to the text we have quoted, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Often did he speak of his

glee, when on account of the little time in the morning, his father would be compelled to read the twelfth of Isaiah, one of the shortest chapters of the Bible; and his misery when in the evening, his father, addressing the oldest sister, said, "Janet, bring the books!" Sometimes he feigned sickness, so that he might lie in bed until reading was past, and as often as possible he had a headache at night, so that he might slip off before evening reading.

And so he went on until he was over fifteen. He had studied at school with considerable diligence, and at that age occasionally taught school. He was doing so when converted. His own description of himself at that time was that he was "proud as a peacock and as empty as a drum." He used to occasionally tease his mother by asking her sceptical questions, pretending to be a semi-infidel, but he was only trifling. The matter had not become yet of very much importance to him.

But the change itself, called conversion, we give in his own words. Many of our readers have heard it many times from his lips. Fortunately we have it in his handwriting. Some years ago one of his grandchildren wrote to him asking him how he was saved, and he sat down at once and wrote as follows:

"Dear Caroline,—Thank you much for your letter enclosed in papa's, asking me how to be saved and saying you would like to be. I am sorry I can't write so that you can read my letter, but I'll be as plain as ever I can.

"Well, I am saved fifty-eight years this month of March. Let me tell you how it came about.

"I was a moral boy, read the Bible, had to do so, for my father made me. I had to go to meetings regularly too, though the meeting-house was distant about six miles. I did not object to this, but hated to read some parts of the Bible. The doctrinal parts—psalms, prophecies, gospels, and epistles I could not bear. Still I said my prayers twice every day, although I did not like to; but the fear of some judgment from God coming on me if I did not kept me at it.

"I knew well that I was not converted, for I saw genuine godliness in my father and mother; yet I had no idea that I was lost, and should be for ever in hell if I died in that condition, until I was awakened.

"I was teaching school in a place called Inchdown, parish of Roskeen, Ross-shire, Scotland. When so engaged, I received a letter from my father on a Thursday, telling me that my dear brother Duncan was to all appearance dying, and asking me to come home to see him.

"On the first Saturday, as I had no school, I went home, walking seven or eight miles to Boath, parish of Alness. There my beloved father had his school. I arrived some time in the afternoon, and as I saw my dear brother lying in his helplessness, I concluded he might die; but immediately my next thought was, 'If that was me, where should I go?' I answered my question myself. 'If that was me, I should go to hell

and be lost for ever.' This made me very uneasy for the time being. However, my anxiety wore off some on the Sunday.

"Next Monday morning I left early to walk back and resume my school teaching. On my way I walked beside a lake called Loch Achnaclaich (Gaelic for The Lake of the Stonefield). The morning breeze raised the tiny wave on the lake; the wave on the shingly shore made a musical murmur; the birds were singing their morning song in the birch trees overhead before looking out for their breakfast; beneath my feet was the hard beaten path, ornamented on both sides with various specimens of both fine and common ferns, growing under the damp shade of the trees among their intertwined roots. All, all are inefface-ably photographed on my mind and memory, so that likely the spot shall always be remembered by me with gratitude. For it was then and there that the thought of Saturday afternoon came back on me afresh and with double vehemence, 'Duncan is dying. If that were me, what would become of me? If that were me, I should go to hell, for I am not born again.'

"The next question that came before me was, 'Why am I not saved? Is there not a Saviour? Yes. Why, then, am I unsaved? What is the matter with me? Would not Jesus save me? Yes, He would. I'm a fool; I have attended to everything first and foremost, but neglected the most important of all. What a fool I am and have been! Did He not come to seek and to save the lost? Well, I'm a poor lost boy!'

"I arrived at my school a little late, and found my scholars making a big 'racket.' However, that gave me no trouble; my thoughts were occupied with myself. 'I am unconverted, and going to hell. I have neglected my salvation. What a foolish, senseless boy!' This trouble of soul continued until the Thursday of the following week. I gave up all my former companions—could not bear to meet them, as they now were no companions to anybody who wanted to be saved.

"On the Thursday just referred to there was a general holiday among all the Presbyterians of Great Britain, in commemoration of the first Westminster Assembly, at which the Confession of Faith, the Catechism, etc., were compiled. As there was no school, I went as usual to the old Presbyterian Church of Alness. Service was over about 4.30 p.m. Of that service I knew nothing, as my mind was so occupied with myself that I paid no attention whatever. I left immediately afterwards for Inchdown. I had to walk about five miles, all alone and deeply troubled. Then found that, notwithstanding my previous privileges, I did not know how to be saved, any more than a Hottentot did.

"But between 5 and 6 p.m., as I was trudging along a short-cut across a wooded hill, it came strongly into my mind, 'Why should I not be saved here and now?' At once I bowed my knees among the heather, and cried to God for mercy; but no relief came. I rose from my knees, saying and sighing, 'I am surely

lost; I can do nothing.' This lesson must be learned; it is necessary for us.

"All at once that Scripture in John xviii. 8, flashed through my mind with great force and brilliancy, 'If ye seek Me, let these go their way.' That meant, Christ says to those who came out from the authorities to make the Lord Jesus and all His followers prisoners, 'If ye seek Me, the Lord Jesus, let My followers go their way or go free.' At once my mind reverted to the Cross, and then I saw the fact: Jesus pouring out His life a sacrifice for me, His precious blood shed on my behalf. As the Scripture says, 'The wages of sin is death,' and 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.' Instantly I comprehended what SUBSTITUTION meant. The work was done. Christ died for my sins eighteen hundred years ago, and the way of God to me was opened up, and so was my way to God. I closed with Christ there and then as my own personal Saviour. I trusted Him. I received Him. I rested on Him. The glorious truth flashed before me, 'Christ died for my sins.' That is how I was saved.

"Somebody will be able to read this scribble to you; perhaps your father can.

"DONALD ROSS."

Those who have heard him tell this story on the platform, as he frequently did, will remember many more details that he sometimes gave than are told in this letter. His depth of exercise he often spoke of,

and also the relief when Christ was revealed. Before he got peace, he used to say, so keen was his sense of vileness, he would look at himself up and down, and say, "What a devil you are!" and yet, so full of resistance was he to God even then, that he bought a snuff-box and took snuff, thinking this might relieve him of the intolerable pressure. But in his own way he would add, that God's hook was in him, like the fisherman's hook in the fish, and, however long he might fight, God had hold of him in such a manner that he could not get away.

Thus does grace act, the prevailing grace of God. Many times, in relating his experience, and dwelling on this phase of it, he would bring in the testimony he heard from a sailor. This man, in speaking of his conversion, closed by saying, "God and I did it all." After a few minutes' silence (for the testimony was given in a meeting where language of this character was little heard), he said, "I see some of you are perplexed by my testimony. Well, just let me say in explanation that I tried not to be saved, and God did all the rest." So our father would tell how unwilling he was to be saved, and how the grace of God overcame his unwillingness and brought him to Himself. And language that conflicted with this, or that in the slightest degree weakened the truth that man was by nature an enemy of God, he would not tolerate. In his judgment it not only was untrue, but it clouded the true grace of God, and robbed Him of His glory as the alone and altogether Saviour. But it acted in

another way, too, on his ministry. It made him hard to please with anything short of new birth. We here qucte a letter written by him in 1863. It might have been written in 1903, so far as his convictions were concerned.

"As I write this on a subject which concerns you and others, allow me, if you please, to state my reasons for writing:—

"First.—I am a servant of God (though a worm), and am bound to lift up my feeble testimony against whatever I see wrong.

"Second.—The subject concerns the present and future of immortal souls; and I am sure you would not like the blood of any on your skirts.

"Third.—It concerns the cause of God. You would not like it brought into ridicule by you, nor to bring discredit on it.

"The occasion of my writing is, that last night, you (Mrs. B— and Miss S—) were so easily deceived by a drunken hypocrite. That woman, Mrs. G—, was thought by you and said by you to have received a great blessing. It has been the habit of that poor wretch for the last eighteen months to pretend to be anxious, and thus get into simple people's favour, with the view of enlisting their sympathy, in order to get some cash to buy drink.

"Well, she has been on a spree all day yesterday, and you see she got very anxious in order to get money out of your purse or Mrs. B—'s. God may convert her. He has not done it yet, and certainly

never will while steaming with drink. Away with sham conversions! I have seen hundreds of them. May our hands be clean in this matter!

"But this case shows the readiness with which many well-meaning persons think people are converted when they are not even convicted, and cry 'Peace, peace,' before God says, 'Peace.' A little more knowledge of human nature in its depth of depravity, hypocrisy, and pride would be useful as a preventive in ministering to such. May God have mercy on those who heal the wounds of the people slightly!

"If we consider the nature of conversion, we will find it neither a small matter nor an easy matter. It goes to the marrow and intents of the heart. It is a cutting off the old stock and engrafting into Christ, a blasting of a person's chief idol—self, a self-crucifixion, a stripping of every rag of self-righteousness, a making naked, naked, lost, lost, just to be willing to be saved by grace.

"This work of cleaning out the foundation is gradual, or it may be abrupt. It may be six months or sixty minutes. When it is abrupt, it is a very hell. Then comes peace—when? When we receive Christ. Out of self into Christ—all our good things thrown overboard, and saved by grace. God does not speak peace before, and never will. It is not peace in the work of the Spirit, or feelings, or in the change in us. True peace is to be found at the Cross, and never anywhere else—a closing with Christ. This is true con-

version, and all who do not come this length are still under the curse, and their religion has no root; therefore it will wither as soon as anything turns up to try it.

"Christless converts all go back. Many who are disappointed at their converts going back are driven, in seeking a solution of this fact, to the doctrine that real Christians fall away, although He says, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.' This sort of converts and non-perseverance always go together.

"I think there are two reasons for God's fellow-workers falling into the mistake of thinking people are converted when they are not:—First, a want of conception of the plan of salvation, and the difference between the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit. This thing also makes some not report their conversion, for others have produced the result that people will not believe them, and the ungodly ridicule it, and make a pillow of it. Last night the question was asked at Footdee, 'What sort of preachers are these who cannot distinguish between a woman steaming with drink and a woman anxious about her soul?'

"In the name of God be faithful, as you meet me at the judgment seat of Christ."

We also quote another letter which emphasises this truth from another side, written in 1869:—

"In answer to your circular just received, I beg to say that 'Reduction in the number of public-houses' is a matter of unspeakable importance to the inhabitants of this city.

"That drunkenness is, generally speaking, in proportion to the number of such houses, cannot be denied, and that such houses exist by the demand they create is also true, I believe. Nevertheless, I beg simply to say, that my mode of dealing with this and other kindred matters for some years back is simply to preach Christ. One revival of God's work for one fortnight in each of our towns and villages on our coast leaves behind it not only more teetotallers than temperance men have made for twenty years, but also living children of God—living epistles known and read of all men. To reform men, more especially in this life's point of view is good, valuable, and excellent, but I may be allowed to say that as I view eternity, the conviction is continually gaining on me that nothing short of conversion to God will eventually be of any great importance. And, I believe, that if similar efforts were put forth for this radical change that are exerted to reform men, the results would be more satisfactory. Worldly men may very naturally be tinkering away at the world—mending it as best they can. I wish them well; but to my mind there is one and only one remedy, 'Ye must be born again.'"

Preparation and Call to Service.

"He teacheth my hands to war."—Psalm xviii. 34.

THE experience related in the previous chapter, not only, as we have stated, brought peace to his own conscience, but it stamped indelibly on his whole being certain truths that gave force and character to his ministry all his life. But before it could become useful in a very wide way, there was a need of discipline and training that his faithful Saviour did not fail to give him in due time. Of course, in the first flush of salvation's joy, he dreamed like many others in the same circumstances, that all he needed to do was to make known the emancipating truth he had himself just received, in order to its reception by others. So he hastened home from the hill-top, where Jesus had revealed Himself to him, with the new-found joy surging through his heart, and burst in upon the miller's family with whom he was living with the announcement, "Christ died for my sins eighteen hundred years ago, and I never believed it until to-night." The miller's wife thought he had lost his wits, but told him to come in and sit down; and then he quietly told to the family the story of his

conversion, and warned them all of the same thing. The Lord gave blessing to that testimony in that home.

But this boldness in declaring what the Lord had done for his soul was followed soon after by dark and distressing times. His brother writes as follows: "Subsequent to his conversion he had great conflicts in doubt and darkness as to the being and character of God; and the writer of these notes knows that God made the stars of heaven one radiant night speak home to his soul, and remind him in power of Him who counts the stars, who builds up Jerusalem, who gathereth together the outcasts of Israel, who healeth those that are broken in their hearts and bruised in their minds. They reminded him of the bright and Morning Star, and he felt, as Peden did in his night-wanderings, the glory of Him of whom those lights spoke." In this experience, we may remark here, he was like almost all whom the Lord has ever used. Duncan Matheson, afterwards his fellow-labourer and much-loved friend, had many months of it, and so had many besides. But it is necessary, apparently, if there is to be any real service given. We read in Galatians i. that Saul, after conversion, went into Arabia, and then returned to Damascus. It is through these experiences that self is learned, and the dreamings and imaginings of the flesh are exposed in their true character, and God's dealings with the soul get their just and proper place. As to this last, we have often heard our father say, "There are some dear souls

living on the 'peelings' of their conversion all their days. We must be weaned even from that, so that the Lord alone may be our object."

Thus all these conflicts were useful to him, furnishing him with weapons and skill to use them in after-life service; and settling himself more solidly upon the Rock of his salvation.

However, this time of conflict passed over, and he settled down as a staid member of the Established Church of Scotland. There was not very much there to keep a young soul fresh, and by-and-by he became engrossed with the things of this life, and eternal realities became of less moment. However, this period of backsliding too was useful to him in his future ministry, for it enabled him to speak with much weight of this (alas!) too common condition among the people of God; and the appeals he could make to the conscience of the backslider were tremendous.

On December 14th, 1847, he married Margaret Leslie, and, a few years afterwards, moved to Edinburgh. Here the Lord restored his soul, and he again found the joy of His salvation. By this time a great change had come over Scotland. The Free Church had been formed by the Evangelical element which had left the old Establishment. This actually occurred in 1843, but the agitation which led to this "Disruption," as it was termed, had been going on for years before. The progress of this movement our father described thus:—

"A few stray lights entered among the Presby-

terians, and began to preach the Gospel. This led to opposition from the unconverted ministers, and appreciation and support from those who were conscientious. Thus the Established Church became divided (not yet outwardly) into 'Moderates,' as the dead ministers called themselves, and 'Highfliers,' as they termed the Evangelicals who preached Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Matters developed and ripened on these lines until 1843, when what is known as the 'Disruption' occurred. About five hundred of the Evangelical preachers went out on a question of principle, sacrificing their livings and practically their all. Among these were some famous preachers, Thomas Chalmers at their head; and, having formed themselves into the 'Free Church of Scotland,' they began to evangelise all around; and the Lord saved many.

"Their places in the Establishment were soon filled by missionaries from abroad. These missionaries were the driest and poorest preachers in the world. Not being able to find a 'place' at home, they had magnanimously offered themselves for foreign work; but now that there were so many vacancies, they were not slow to return.

"The outgoing Evangelicals or 'Highfliers' got the crowds and the converts, and the 'Moderates' got the glebes, the manses, and the stipends. One of the Evangelicals we cannot forget—Dr. John M'Donald, of Ferintosh, Ross-shire, a man of uncommon eloquence, power, and godliness. We have seen hundreds awakened under his preaching. His appeals to the

consciences of the Christless we have never heard equalled anywhere. He went to the Lord many years ago, and has doubtless met with many of his children in the Gospel.

"There were a few minor secessions from the Establishment before this, but the 'Disruption' of 1843 eclipsed them all. Those who are living now who were then interested and eye-witnesses of the ecclesiastical changes of that time are never likely to forget the commotion. It was a turning-point in the religious life and activity of Scotland. The Gospel was introduced into many dead parishes. The seceders preached better than ever, and got the people to hear them; and the 'Moderates' seemed to have settled down—most of them without a prayer-meeting in the parish—to the loaves and fishes. In many cases it stands so to this day. This great change gave much scope to Gospel effort among the people. Many young men were saved, and barren wastes were discovered where not a Christian could be found, although for years under 'Moderate' preaching. Home and city missionaries began to visit the people at their homes, to read the Word of God and pray with them. Then mission-rooms were hired, and on Sunday and week-evenings meetings were held for preaching the Gospel."

We may add to the above statement, as being directly in line with this memoir, that Dr. Chalmers, whose heart yearned after the lost and perishing in an unusual degree, was foremost in the work of planting

missions, especially among the neglected and outcast in the large cities. He picked out one of the poorest and most miserable parts of Edinburgh, and began to seek by various means to get the Gospel in among them. After some time he succeeded in having a church built in the Westport, and this was known as The Chalmers Territorial Church. Mr. Tasker was the first minister of this church—an active, aggressive Gospel preacher, full of energy, and in perfect sympathy with Dr. Chalmers in his desire to have the Gospel preached to the poor. With this church our father, who had gone with the seceders in 1843, united, and, being active in the work, he was soon ordained an elder. He was given charge of a mission, and here he began his public ministry, holding a meeting every Sunday night. Of course he was engaged during the week in secular business, and had no thought of ever giving up all his time to the Lord's work. But the Lord had ordained otherwise, and it came about in this fashion.

A Mr. Houldsworth, owner of the Coltness Iron Works, New Mains, Lanarkshire, wrote to Edinburgh for a missionary to work among the miners and working people of the district. He had already engaged two doctors to minister to their bodily wants, and now desired a missionary to care for their souls.

Mr. Tasker, who was deputed to find a suitable man, first offered the post to the missionary of the church; but he was a timid man, and feared to go among the coal-miners, who had a reputation for

roughness and ungodliness. Then Mr. Tasker submitted the matter to our father, and advised him to undertake the work. This he positively refused to do—not from unwillingness to serve the Lord with all his might, but because he did not wish to be dependent on preaching for his support. Such a thing as direct dependence on the Lord on the part of those whom He calls out into His service he had never heard of; and, of course, in the post that was offered him in New Mains there was a salary quite sufficient to provide for himself and his family. But about this time he was thrown out of business, his employer having retired; and, although he sought work in every direction most diligently, nothing opened up. All this time Mr. Tasker was urging upon him the work at New Mains as a providential opening, and at last he consented to go, on condition that he should have liberty to give it up in three months if he deemed himself unfit for it, or for any other reason. One of his objections which he gave to undertaking the work was his inability to preach; and it was in reply to this that Mr. Tasker gave him the advice he never forgot, and often passed on to others, "You preach into your own heart, and you will be surprised how many other hearts your preaching will fit."

So he started for New Mains in fear and trembling, and while on the train going there, his mind was much exercised about his future work. Here, there entered into his soul a sense of the need of the Holy Ghost in ministry that he never lost. He reviewed in his

mind the mighty work of God recounted in the Acts of the Apostles, and the power that wrought in it all, and he said to himself, "I need the Holy Ghost for my work." In all his ministry thereafter he not only sought the power of the Holy Ghost for himself, but he urged constantly upon others this as the one thing needful. Ministry that did not have this he cared nothing whatever for. It might be able or it might be poor, nothing mattered, in his judgment, if it were not in the Holy Ghost. A frequent saying of his on this head was, "If you cannot preach in the Holy Ghost, you should put a padlock on your lips, and keep the key in your pocket."

Thus was he "squeezed out," as he would himself say, into the Lord's service. Many times he has confessed that his service to the Lord was like his salvation. He was not willing to be saved, neither was he willing to give himself wholly to the Lord in service. But God made him willing to be saved, and the same grace made him willing to devote himself, body and soul, to the service of his Saviour. We may state here, as his convictions up to the end of his life, supported by long and varied experience, that if the Lord was to get the very best that was in a man, whether at home or abroad in foreign fields, he must be wholly given up to His service, and free from every other tie. "Give thyself wholly to them" was often quoted by him, and also, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." That not all were fit for this path he, of course, freely

admitted, but if he saw the slightest sign of ability and grace in a young man he was most persistent in encouraging him in every way to give himself wholly to the work. He thought there was no path so honourable or to be so much coveted by a young man as this one, and since he has gone to the Lord, we have received many letters from men whom he took by the hand and encouraged, and cheered, and helped on in this path, and their hearts all tell out the same story as to the extraordinary power he had to influence young men in this direction.

In Labours Abundant.

"Publicly and from house to house."—Acts xx. 20.

IN New Mains, to which he moved in the year 1857, he began that work, that closed only with his life of spending all his time in going in and out among the people with the Gospel of God's grace. It was here that the appalling need of the masses first laid hold of him. The professing Church had been shamefully negligent of the poor of the people; and, although the new movement had given a powerful impetus to evangelisation, yet many places were wholly neglected. The average minister was of little use in this work, and many of them, indeed, cared nothing about it. Moreover, they were exceedingly jealous of what was called "lay preaching"—not alone Established Church ministers, but Free Church ecclesiastics as well. One can hardly credit at this date the intense opposition, on the part of the clergy as a body, to those they were pleased to term "laymen" undertaking the work of the Lord. The objection was, not that they were uneducated men or unfit men, but simply that they were laymen, not having had hands laid on them in the due order.

But with this spirit of hostility our father at this time came little in contact. He bowed to the system

of clerisy as a divine institution, and moved about among the people with his Gospel without exciting the enmity of the ministers in any way. His work was simple, but often distressing. Colliery accidents were of frequent occurrence, and he witnessed sad scenes in the homes of these people. His one remedy was the Gospel, and that he sought to minister in every way in his power. He held kitchen meetings, and visited the homes, prayed and read the Word, and in the best way he knew brought eternal things before them. One lasting memento of his stay there was the conversion of Maggie Shiels. She was the sister of one of the doctors, and was deaf and dumb. When she lay on a sick-bed, her brother invited our father to visit her, which he did. In order to talk to her, he acquired the deaf and dumb alphabet, and by this means brought Christ before her. She was saved, and shortly afterwards went to the Lord. Her story is told in a tract which was widely circulated at one time.

However, he did not remain long in New Mains. His heart, fired with a sense of the deep need of the people and the power of the Gospel to save them, longed for a more extended field of usefulness. It was soon opened up for him. The spirit of evangelisation which was then abroad had laid hold of a godly Orcadian, Mr. Thomas Rosie. He became exercised about the need of the coast of Scotland—the fishermen and sailors, who, as a rule, were in a state of sad neglect. Mr. Rosie appealed to Christians in every way, and at last succeeded in getting interest aroused.

One or two organisations for the preaching of the Gospel in the coast towns and villages were formed, the last one being the North-East Coast Mission, with its headquarters in Aberdeen. Shortly after its foundation, Mr. Rosie went to India as a missionary. Then the directors of the mission—among them being Mr. Alexander Brand—sought a superintendent. After some negotiation, our father was appointed to the position of secretary and superintendent. When he moved to Aberdeen to begin his work, he found that there was neither money in the treasury nor missionaries in the field; and he was expected to get both. Exactly how he went at this work, Mr. Munro tells in his contribution to this memoir.

About the time of his taking up this work, Mr. Reginald Radcliffe visited Aberdeen. He was a lawyer from Liverpool, and the Lord had blessed him much in conversions. Mr. Brownlow North, too, who had distinguished himself in past days by his ungodliness, was in the city preaching the Gospel. These men were laymen, according to the clerical use of the word, and consequently met opposition from the ministers that we of this generation can hardly understand. Mr. Radcliffe was a gracious, prudent man, and used his wisdom to steer carefully among the shoals and quicksands of ecclesiasticism, so that he might be unhindered in his work of getting among the people with the Gospel. He, at first at least, would not stand in the pulpit, for it was deemed sacri-

lege for a layman to go into that sacred place. So he stood at the lower desk, and from there delivered those wondrous appeals that shook Aberdeen to its centre. He also, in order to keep down prejudice, advertised himself as going to "address" a meeting, for it excited horror in these clerical minds that a lawyer would dare to preach, so he was never announced to "preach," and he persuaded Mr. North to act in the same way. However, there were some noble exceptions to this clerical spirit, and the work of the Lord went on, and many were saved.

With the revival work our father was in complete accord, and he entered heartily into the meetings, helping as he was able. But his duties in connection with the mission often called him away, and he sought in other places to arouse the people out of the slumber of mere profession of religion, to a sense of the need of a vital link with Christ. Thus in the beginning of his work in the North-East Coast Mission he was brought into direct touch with the men who, at that time, were seeking to arouse sleeping Scotland. And with these men, and others like-minded, he went on all the time of his connection with the mission. Amongst those who, during this time, were his intimate friends and fellow-workers was the late Duncan Matheson, whom he never referred to after he was gone save as "dear Duncan Matheson." They were a great deal together, and probably no man had so much influence over our father as this man of God. Indeed, when the opposition from the clergy

became intense, and he felt he must resign his place in the Mission, in order to be free to serve the Lord in His own way, it was Mr. Matheson's counsel that again and again restrained him. They enjoyed each other's society immensely, for they were both very genial and full of harmless fun, and at the same time both devoted to the one object, the salvation of the lost. It is true, their respect for the clerical body was not great, and the priestly pretensions of young men just out of college were often causes of mirth to them, and perhaps more often of grief, but it was borne with because it was felt that in order to get the Gospel at the people, these men must be kept placated—at least this was the case in many places. They would sometimes be asked to preside at their meetings, and sometimes requested to pronounce the benediction, although, on one occasion, when a young clergyman at the close of a meeting officiously stepped forward to do this, Mr. Matheson interrupted him by saying, "Tuts, man, I'll say the blessing mysel'!"

Our father's antipathy to clericalism probably began about this time. He thought that the system, in its effect on men who went into it, was only bad; and many a time in his later years, when speaking of some who had been ministers at one time and had given it up, but still showed marks of the clerical spirit, he would say, "Well, you can drive the devil out of a man a good deal easier than you can the minister."

This friendship was only closed by Mr. Matheson's

death. They used to discuss with each other the question of dying; and on one occasion Mr. Matheson said, in his genial way, "Well, Donald, if you die first, I'll give you a whole page in the 'Herald of Mercy,' and put a black border all around it." But he never had the opportunity. On his last journey home, when the disease that finally carried him off had made terrible ravages on his strong, rugged frame, he called at Alma Cottage, as he said himself, "to see Donald once more." Our father was away from home at the time; but they are now together with Christ, which is far better.

Thank God! friendships of this kind are not closed for ever by death. The bond between these two men was one that abides—the only one that abides, and that will be renewed in all the power of eternal life in resurrection. What measure of recognition there is now, we don't know. Neither Duncan Matheson nor Donald Ross is asleep in the grave as to their spirits; they are with Christ. A few weeks before our father died, we wrote him of the death of Roderick Docharty in Chicago. He and his wife had both been brought to Christ in the early days of work in that city, and his wife had died some years before he did. In reply to our letter, he said, "Well, I don't suppose Roderick has had time to take a look at Flora yet; he is feasting on the Saviour of the lost, who has at last taken him to Himself." Perhaps it is thus with both of these warriors of the Lord.

Divine Leading and Human Opposition.

"Counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."—Acts v. 41.

MR. MUNRO has, in a paper which forms part of this book, given an account of the work of the North-East Coast Mission as a whole, and another has supplied details of the work in one place—Footdee—where our father personally laboured much. These are sufficient in themselves to give a fair view of the work and the chief human worker. So, instead of attempting to repeat all this, we here give a paper from our father's own pen, written some years ago, and published in "Our Record." He says:—

"The sphere of service of the North-East Coast Mission was from Ferryden in the south to Thurso in the north—a distance, counting indentations of the coast, of probably five hundred miles.

"We had room for over twenty missionaries, and the Lord blessed the efforts put forth very much. There was an unbroken, continuous work for years. At that time we knew nothing of gathering to the Name of Jesus—indeed, hadn't even heard of it. All the missionaries were not equal in gifts or graces, but there were in the mission some of the choicest spirits

and most devoted men we ever met—godly, self-denying, and successful. We might name some of them, but forbear. The day will declare all.

"As a rule, we could get the people of the coast to hear us, but this aroused the jealousy of the clergy to a fearful extent in some cases. Especially did the Established Church men dislike it, for they hated everything in the shape of Evangelicalism. Complaints began to come in to our directors about the missionaries from the clergy. Of course, they expected the missionaries to be their creatures, but this could not be if we were to preach the Gospel. However, the missionaries were instructed to work with them if possible, and we never fostered, but rather discouraged, everything in the shape of independency. We considered ourselves rather as an auxiliary of the Church than antagonistic. It was part of our duty to call on all the ministers when visiting a mission district, and we did it most conscientiously; but it became more trying every year, until, in the last few years, we never called without taking the district missionary with us, that he might be a witness to all that passed at these interviews, for it was found that many of them, through their jealousy, made untruthful statements about what was said.

"One thing we learned then that had not occurred to us before: that was, that the clergy wanted, not the conversion of the people, but their own status maintained and their funds swelled. When sinners were awakened at our meetings, and called on the ministers

for guidance, we found that in nearly every case, instead of guiding to the Lord Jesus, they simply healed the hurt slightly by saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there was no peace. Gradually it became our settled conviction that the clergy were the greatest hindrance in the country to the people's salvation. This staggered us, and we often asked ourselves, 'Can this be the thing that Christ ordered?'

"About this time we wrote a tract and published it, suggesting to the ministers to go on strike for a year or more, and allow nine pairs of Evangelists to be let loose on Scotland, pledging our word that more conversions would be seen through the eighteen than through all the ministers put together in the same time.

"Another thing was made very plain to us then—that is, that nearly all the church members in the Established Church were absolutely unconverted, and that only a sprinkling of the Free Church people were born again. And this was the work of the clergy, simply to deceive unconverted sinners by a profession of religion, and to maintain them in their deception. What a powerful agency of the devil the ministers were! But what was to be done? Separation was never thought of. We remember preaching one evening at a place near Aberlour (Banffshire) on the text, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate' (2 Cor. vi., 17). At the close of the meeting, a brother, an elder in the Establishment, laid his hand on the preacher's shoulder, and said, 'All true, dear brother

Ross; but where are we to go?' Our answer was, 'That is what is troubling myself.' And that was really the case. We were convinced that something was radically wrong with the Churches. They were made up mostly, as we have said, of unconverted persons; and the preachers did not seem to care for that, but, on the contrary, spoke evil of those who were converted, and of those whom God was using for conversions. The effect of all this was an alienation on the part of those newly converted from the parsons, for they could only regard them as enemies. This was becoming more pronounced every month; and, for ourselves, we were beginning to think over the question whether it was not our duty to have no more fellowship with the thing that was simply an agency for the Devil to deceive souls. This gradually ripened into positive conviction, and led to the first steps on the way to complete separation.

"The first outward step toward separation was taken by us when visiting the missionaries stationed in the district of Peterhead. We there wrote to the directors of the mission our resignation as secretary and superintendent. We did not see very far at that time, but this much had become matters of settled conviction:—

"1. We must be separate from this curse—that is, the ministers who, in the name of God, were doing the Devil's work.

"2. If we do God's work, we can depend on God for supplies, as Paul and others since his day have done.

"3. We will confine our missionary efforts to the inland towns and parishes of Scotland, and keep altogether out of the way of the old Coast Mission. We will hire halls and get schools, and preach Christ wherever we can.

"4. We will have no committee of directors but the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"The resignation, however, was not accepted, but was returned by the treasurer with the request to withdraw it, and an offer of an increase of salary. This was a test, sure enough, for the wherewithal to meet the demands of a large family was a serious question. But grace for the occasion was given, and in about two weeks the resignation was handed in again, with the assurance that it was final.

"By and bye several of the missionaries joined us in our separation, and we called ourselves "The Northern Evangelistic Society," for this was as far as we had got in our knowledge of the Lord's ways. Among those associated with us in the society, in the course of its brief existence, we may mention, as interesting to many of our readers, our beloved brethren Donald Munro and John Smith, who are still in the work of the Lord.

"When returning home from the last meeting of our old directors, a letter was handed us containing a cheque for £60 (or $300) for the new enterprise, as it was called. Thus God met us with encouragement, and we were free to serve Him without hindrance. Money came in and a long-indulged dream was a

reality. All Scotland was open to us for Gospel work, and none to control us but God. In other ways, too, God set His seal upon the step, for conversions took place everywhere, and we enjoyed His smile. Opposition, of course, we encountered, and that in some very bitter forms. We knew nothing of gathering to the name of the Lord Jesus, but we did certainly know that what claimed to be the Church was doing a gigantic work for the devil in deceiving the people, and we were now experiencing its enmity and hatred to God's work. Those converted at the meetings were disgusted with the churches and unconverted ministers, and we were being much exercised about what was to be done. We had heard of "Brethren," but only as bad, bad people, and we resolved to have nothing to do with them. Our information, however, came from the parsons.

"In forming this new Mission Society, we had made many steps in advance of the old Mission, for we were trying to do God's work in His way. It may be worth while to copy here a letter written to a brother now with the Lord, James Smith. He was labouring in another sphere, but desired to be identified with the new Society. So we wrote him as follows:

"'I am in receipt of your note expressing your desire and intention to enter the Asylum, *alias* "The Northern Evangelistic Society."

"'I beg you to understand two things. First, I don't want you to leave your present sphere of labour.

I believe you are doing God's work where you are. Second, if you do leave it, the way is open to us, but remember, 'bonds and imprisonment await you in every city,' and you *may* get more wages but I do not promise you more than eighteen pence a week.

"'Yours in Christ Jesus,

"'DONALD ROSS.'

"The reference in the above letter to 'bonds and imprisonment' was caused by the intense opposition we were now meeting, and our statement as to wages, although more a bit of pleasantry than anything else, shows how we were gradually moving farther and farther from the system of hiring men to do the Lord's work. The truth is, everything was conspiring to force us from old traditions, and to drive us, in our necessities, to the Word of the Lord for guidance.

"On the surface we saw at least three things:—First, those parsons were hirelings—that is not God's way; second, they had human ordination, and that is the only one they recognise—thus making nothing of God's ordination; and, third, their churches consisted mostly of unconverted people. And here was the whole system fighting us as we were honestly seeking to do the work of the Lord; and the more carefully we sought to do it in His ways, the more determined was the opposition.

"A Mr. M'Intosh, a licentiate of the Free Church, wrote about us, and the parsons helped to pay the expense of publishing the manuscript. In this pamphlet

we were called 'The New Prophets,' and our supposed heresies were largely elaborated on. This ungodly brochure was eagerly read by the enemies everywhere, and some of the newspapers now gave us the benefit of their worldly wisdom. As for ourselves, it only showed that the whole system was of the earth earthy, and made us more determined to go on in the Lord's ways.

"Those of the Lord's stewards who had been contributing of their means were being constantly tormented by stories of one kind and another about us, and often we had to reply to some of the complaints. But the end came at last, and we cut loose completely from the Presbyterian Church. A letter written about this time we here copy:—

"'I need not tell you what anxiety and trouble I have recently had in connection with the Society. The circumstances need not be enumerated here fully, but a few things may be noticed:—

"'First: From the disaffected districts in Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, and part of Moray, not one word is said of fruit, though there be that to a greater extent than in any country district in Scotland. The adversaries don't see that—simply, no doubt, because they don't wish to see it. There is glorious fruit in every place—not speaking at all of England—thanks be to God!

"'Second: The misrepresentations of things said, and the positive falsehoods circulated about us, do credit, certainly, to the inventors' imagination, but not

to their character. We have not made it our business to speak against ministers, nor do we mean to do so; but God is with us of a truth.

"'That people in some places have left the churches, and that certain other people who might be mentioned have tried to make capital out of the Lord's work in order to further their own peculiar views, is true. We, however, have not encouraged either of these things. But the people who have left the churches gave us their reason for so doing—that they could not continue because they were preached at and could have no peace, and were injured by the perpetual talk against the work of God. Let it never be forgotten that it is the Lord's people who are dissatisfied with the ministers, and that the ungodly stick to them like leeches.

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"'At present there is no appearance of the end of this opposition, but the contrary. It looks as if the opposers were determined to stamp us out. Whether they succeed or not, one thing is clear: there is glorious fruit, which shall be for all eternity to the honour of God.

"'In view of all these difficulties, and the quarter they spring from, and after pondering over the situation as before God, I cease from this time to be a member of the Free Church of Scotland, and at present join no other denomination, but will embrace the opportunity of remembering Jesus' death whenever and wherever I get the privilege.

"'During these past years, as you know, I have had a large field for mission work, and have been privileged, perhaps beyond many, to see real, permanent, precious fruit, and, moreover, to see the outcome of these revival works. There are two things press themselves on my attention—and no doubt, other labourers, were they in similar favourable circumstances to notice them, would be equally impressed.

"'The two things are, first, the chief obstacles to the work of evangelization come from the ministers.

"'The second thing is, that the converts who have been exclusively under ministers' training and teaching are spiritually poor and sickly compared with the converts trained under missionary and evangelistic agency, whether our own or any other. Indeed, the result, as coming out in the character is quite a contrast. Thus the perpetually labouring for souls and conversions appears to me (though unspeakably precious), to be like an attempt to fill up the ocean, for the *real* converts trained under them, instead of being *reproductive* in saving others, are, with few exceptions, withered and wasted. A very few of them only come out to the help of the Lord against the mighty, but they waste the little fragrance they have on seat-letting, standing by the plate on Sunday morning, or giving a few coppers to make up the minister's salary.

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"'These, I say, and other considerations make me form the second resolution, viz., that I will try to dis-

cover the truth about the cause of these two great evils—the absence of conversions and the converted spoiled and made useless. If possible, then—though I should die in the attempt—every truth that I discover on this topic and correlative matters I will make known by tongue and pen.

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"'In these circumstances I cannot say whether you may sympathise with me or not, though I cannot doubt that you would do so to a great extent were you quite aware of the confederacy against revival work. Moreover, I believe the battle is only beginning, and if you continue to support us, I venture to predict the adversaries will keep you in perpetual torment. I am, if the Lord will uphold me, quite ready to fight it out, and go to Heaven from the battlefield.

"'In the circumstances there are three courses open to me:—First—To go on with all the agents in the society as if nothing had happened, and look only to the Lord for all support; or second—To cut off the four agents for whose salary I looked to you, and then go on with the other ten, depending on God; or third—To give them all a month's warning, and then begin, *all alone*, on August 1st, and, if the Lord send me more money than I require for bed, board, and washing, to employ one and another, and call no man master save Jesus only, and be not brought into bondage to any.'

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"The above will give a fair insight into our mind at this time. This was written to one who had helped the society by contributing enough to support four of those engaged in the work, and it was written in answer to some reports that were being sent him by our enemies. However, not to linger over it, the final outcome was, that the Northern Evangelistic Society was dissolved as suggested, and each one was directed to the Lord for himself. We were then free from everything in the shape of human organisation for service or anything else, free to take, in simplicity, the Lord's ways in every detail.

"Then came the question of breaking bread in memory of the Lord. The early Christians did so; why shouldn't we? We had by this time gotten entirely clear of the thought that a humanly ordained man was needed to dispense the elements, or in any way give official sanction to this precious ordinance. We found nothing of it in the Word, so we were quite ready to go on doing it as unto Him who commands it. And here it is where our link with those known as Brethren was formed. There was at this time in the city of Aberdeen a small, weak company of Christians breaking bread in a small hall on Castle Street. The writer had leased what was known as the Gallowgate Chapel for Gospel work, and preaching went on in it continuously. So we remembered the Lord with this little company on Sunday morning, but all the rest of our time was spent in the service of the Lord in connection with this chapel. After a little, John

Ritchie, now with Christ, the chief man in that meeting, came to us, suggesting that we amalgamate—that is, that we should break bread together in the chapel and go on together in service. To the breaking of bread part, of course, we had no objection, but we gave them distinctly to understand that we would keep control of the place for Gospel and other service. The truth is: we doubted the ability and godliness of this party to keep up the meetings, hence our reserve. However, we came together, and here began in reality the Aberdeen Assembly as it now is. Not only so, but all over the county and other counties of Scotland, and also in the north of England, meetings of this kind sprang up, and are going on yet. Most of those associated with us in the Northern Evangelistic Society came outside too, and now went on labouring for the Lord independent of man, and looking only to the Lord for guidance and support. This affected those, of course, who had sympathised with them and us, all over the spheres of our labour, and it was a simple matter to lead them into the Lord's ways as to remembering Him and carrying out His Word. In fact, there were many waiting only for a way to be opened up; and when it was, there was no lack of those ready to walk in it. In most of these places there was no such thing as gathering in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ before, but now there was much rejoicing that the Lord had turned again 'the captivity of Zion.' Of course this only increased the anger of the parsons, and we were denounced at almost every

service. But God was graciously saving many, and we baptized the converts and broke bread according to His Word, and paid little heed to the opposition.

"Our determination, expressed in the letter printed above, to 'make known by tongue and pen' what we discovered in the Word about the state of things in Christendom, we sought to carry out. We published four papers monthly: 'The Northern Evangelistic Intelligencer,' which afterwards became 'The Northern Witness'; 'The Northern Evangelist,' a Gospel paper; 'The Northern Youth,' for children; and 'The Northern Assemblies,' specially meant for the newly-formed meetings. All of these have passed out of existence except the first, and it is now, under the name of 'The Witness,' ably conducted by Mr. J. R. Caldwell, who assumed it when we left that scene of labour.

"The first thing that drove us outside was the sham within. It was not instilled into our minds by anyone; but in our trouble we resolutely resolved to read nothing but the Bible, and to us it was truly astonishing, when we got through the ordeal, to find ourselves in the company of such men as J. R. Caldwell and others, who afterwards became a great blessing to us."

Sojourn and Work in Edinburgh: 1874–1879.

"Teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord."
—Acts xv. 35.

IN 1874 our father moved to Edinburgh from Aberdeen. He had, as stated already in the previous chapter, begun to publish by tongue and pen all that he was finding in the Word of God with reference to all things, and, in order to make his testimony more effective, and give it a distinct place, he had opened a shop in Aberdeen for the dissemination of Christian literature. In Edinburgh he opened another shop, with the intention of retiring somewhat from his previous activity in preaching, and devoting himself to publishing and selling books and tracts. He still kept on the Aberdeen depot, so, one would think, his hands were full. But he found time to go away on a Gospel campaign again and again, and the Lord gave him to see fruit for his toil in Midlothian and other counties. As a business man he was not very successful. The truth is—the combination he attempted was impossible, and in the course of time he disposed of the business entirely. But during this time he opened another shop in Glasgow, and the

publishing office in the hands of Messrs. Pickering and Inglis is the lineal descendant of that venture. All the others are now out of existence.

But we cannot pass over his sojourn in Edinburgh without reference to one phase of his experience there that displayed his courage in maintaining what he believed to be the truth at any cost to himself. There were difficulties in connection with the meeting which existed in Edinburgh when he went there which he deemed great enough to keep him from identifying himself with it. But he would not be deprived of his privilege of remembering the Lord, for he had been two years in the Free Church without it, and when he saw from the Word of God that neither an ordained man nor a consecrated place was necessary to the observing of the memorial feast, he "rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil." From that time, no man, no set of men, no church, no rule or regulation would he permit to rob him of this great privilege. So when he moved to Edinburgh he began in his own house to remember the Lord with those of the family who were saved, and one or two others who had difficulties about going to the old meeting. Some, not of Edinburgh, sought to interfere with this fresh start, but although he listened to what they had to say, he declined to bow to their judgment in the matter. He did not believe then, nor did he to the end of his days believe, in edicts and decrees issued by assemblies. In fact, when he first learned the truth, that he did not need to go to the Free Church

or any other organisation in order to remember the Lord, that "where two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus, there He is," it was with the utmost reluctance that he identified himself with those known as Brethren. He feared much that he might be putting himself under another yoke, and it was his determined purpose to call no man Master, save One. He dreaded that this precious privilege of remembering Jesus might be linked up with a mere party that would claim the right to make and unmake lawful gatherings of the Lord's people. This right he believed the Lord had reserved to Himself, and he jealously watched and resented everything that seemed like encroachments on the Lord's prerogative. So, when his course in Edinburgh was censured by outside parties, he refused their judgment and went on, believing that the Lord would Himself interfere, and that none else had the right to do so. This course he kept, and by and by the meeting he began was duly recognised all over. As a matter of fact he paid little heed to the outside judgment, his own mind being fully made up in the matter. But, of course, after the difficulties were removed, the path was easier and pleasanter.

It may be of interest here to say that, during this time of isolation he was approached by the Exclusive Brethren, who sought to win him to what they regarded as the Lord's way. He was invited to take tea in the house of one of them, and there met two of their leaders. The question was gone over quite fully,

and, although, as he stated to the writer often since that time, the temptation was very great in the circumstances to cast in his lot with them, his difficulties were many, and nothing they could say removed them. It was the very same question with them as he was then contending with others about, the right on the part of any body of believers, great or small, to determine the lawfulness or otherwise of assemblies of the Lord's people. He had encountered the Exclusive system soon after leaving the Free Church, and was not enamoured of it then, and, although in this time of trial he was perhaps more disposed to listen to what they had to say than before or since, yet his mind ever rejected their pretension to be able to draw a circle in Christendom, inside of which only were meetings that could be recognised, and outside of which nothing was to be owned in the way of assemblies of the Lord's people. And we may add, when this pretension was adopted by others he was just as decided in rejecting it. Not that he was careless or indifferent about meetings he associated with, or the character, morally or doctrinally, of individuals he might meet. On the contrary, he was very careful indeed in such cases to be entirely separate, but where no such questions were directly involved he believed the Lord alone must judge.

Mr. Munro tells in his paper of the first journey to America. When he returned to Scotland he was very unwilling to go back again. "But," as he said then, "America was on his back," and he could not get rid

of it. We think this is a fitting place to give some information as to the Lord's dealings with him in money matters, because he had an experience at this time that tried him considerably, and, we may add, this was the first time he ever spoke of such things to the writer. He was, as we have stated, most reluctant to leave Scotland, and he has often told us that he really felt the Lord was dealing somewhat hardly with him in asking him at his age to break up all old ties and begin again in the New World. So he delayed going, and tried to take up the Lord's work in Scotland again. But he could not make any headway, and, moreover, his money was soon exhausted. Not until this was the case did he consent to go back to America, and there the Lord not only gave him to see fruit for his labour, but bountifully supplied his needs. Many times he has said that the Lord never got anything out of him unless by "squeezing." He said He "squeezed" him into being saved, He "squeezed" him into going wholly into the Lord's work in New Mains, He "squeezed" him out of the Free Church, and now He "squeezed" him out of Scotland into America.

But, to return to money matters, which we only refer to for the sake of encouraging all who really trust the Lord: When he left the Free Church he took what the world would call a very serious step. He had a large family dependent on him, and there was nothing in sight to support them but God Himself. But he took the step, launching out on the faithfulness

of a gracious God—and let it be here recorded to His eternal praise that He failed not His trusting servant to the end of his days. But he did occasionally have trials. One of them occurred as we have stated, and he told us then of the faithfulness of God since he was wholly cast on Him. It was at this time that we first observed one feature of his character that we perceived often afterwards, namely, a fear lest God's good name should be brought into disrepute in the minds of others by His apparent failure to make good His promises to those who, like himself, had trusted Him. He said that when God seemed to be slow about meeting his need, or even apparently failed to do so, He was simply using this method of accomplishing His purpose in connection with His servant. For instance, he said, when he left the North-East Coast Mission and established the Inland Association, it pained him beyond measure to find that the Lord failed to send him the supplies to meet the need of the new venture. Had He done so, he said, he would probably be in that kind of thing yet, but he found that the Lord had a better way for him, and it was only by withholding the supplies that his mind was exercised as to whether or not he was in the Lord's path in the matter. The result of the exercise was that he found a better way of doing the Lord's work; he believed the Lord's own way, and in that path He again experienced the faithfulness of the Lord. But now he was being tried again, and he said he feared the Lord was pushing him out of Scotland altogether,

and he was afraid he had been rebellious in the matter. However, after he yielded and went to the Western Continent, the Lord, as we have already stated, met his needs in all circumstances. We may add here, that in the last few years of his life he had no trials in this way. The Lord met his wants abundantly, and his own explanation of it was that it was like the Lord to be so good to a useless old man.

Another word, perhaps, is in place here. He never was a mere receiver of the Lord's bounty; he was a liberal giver to the work of the Lord. He enjoyed giving; and he said he believed the Lord was condescending in His grace to him in this respect, in that He not only supplied his needs, but gave him the privilege of being a succourer of others also. His conceptions of God were very lofty and inspiring, and many times we have heard him say, "People tell me that the Lord gave them such and such in answer to prayer. If the Lord gave me only what my miserable heart prayed for, I would be poor enough. But He loads me with blessings that I never thought of or asked for; and that is like Him." As he preached about "the living and eternal God," as he delighted to call Him, one's heart involuntarily responded, "This God is our God for ever and ever," and bowed itself in worship. We remember on one occasion, when talking about going to a certain city to open up some work for the Lord, a brother asked him, "Do you know anyone there, Mr. Ross?" "Do I know anyone?" he replied. "I know God." Such were his high

thoughts of the unfailing faithfulness of his God, and the reality of His constant care over him, that one being with him would unwittingly be weaned away from the petty thoughts that are so natural to us about our God, and won to better and truer thoughts concerning Him. "People imagine," he would say, "that God measures out His grace to His people in ounces and small measures. No, no; God is a great God, and must act like Himself in all the greatness of His character."

In keeping with these high thoughts of God were his low thoughts of man. The pretence to some special attainments in grace he had nothing but scorn for. In the presence of God he was simply a sinner saved by sovereign grace, and he never aspired to be anything else. Christ was his all. He often spoke of an experience he had which, he said, brought him into solid peace of heart as to himself. He said he was striving for some unattained ideal in his spiritual life, when the words in 1 Cor. i. 30 were flashed upon his soul: "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." His explanation of the Scripture, as its glorious message filled him, was, "I am a fool, I am unrighteous—in short, I am everything I ought not to be; but I am not in the question at all: it is Christ now who is before God for me." Many times, in speaking on this line in order to lift God's people out of themselves, he would tell of a man, not altogether sound mentally, who used to reply, when

people asked him, "Well, how are you to-day?" "How am I? It's not me any more, it's Christ." This was his Gospel for the Lord's people—their oneness with Christ—and it was a Gospel he thoroughly enjoyed himself, and that gave him a peace and calm in the presence of God that is not always found even among preachers.

Labours in America.

"Always abounding in the work of the Lord."
—1 Corinthians xv. 58.

THE year 1879 found our father settled in the New World. He had begun with a tent in Chicago in the summer of that year, and God soon raised up friends and sympathisers. Before coming to that great city, he had spent some time in Valparaiso and Crown Point, Indiana, and, of course, had friends in both these places; but in his new field he was an absolute stranger. However, counting on Him who, as he put it more than once, had "befriended him all his days," he pitched his tent and took rooms for himself and fellow-labourer. It did look to nature a hopeless and foolish undertaking; but he was not accustomed to look at things from the standpoint of nature, but from the vantage-ground of faith, and he saw only "the living and eternal God." He was what men of business would call a "plunger" in his methods. We have known him again and again risk all that he had on some new venture in the way of Gospel work, and undertake responsibilities in the way of expense that we certainly saw no way to meet;

but God never failed him or put him to shame in any way. He did not wait for an assembly to rent a hall for him if he saw any opening for the work; he rented it himself, and went ahead. If the Lord's people came to his aid, he was very grateful to them and to the Lord; but he was essentially and in every way a pioneer. And this feature came out in other ways. He was never daunted by small numbers. It seemed to make no difference to his preaching whatever, and he was perfectly happy in the work if he found anything doing, however little.

His beginning in Chicago had, as we have said, little in appearance to encourage. He and his fellow-labourer, James Goodfellow, were absolutely unknown to all but God; but this was enough. We remember hearing him preach at one time about Moses going up from the back-side of the desert to deliver Israel. He gave a vivid description of the old man marching along the road, leading his donkey, with his wife and two fretful babies seated on its back. "Where are you going, Moses?" "Up to Egypt." "And what are you going to do there?" "I am going to deliver Israel. This is Jehovah's expedition against Egypt." It was somewhat after this fashion he began in Chicago, and the God of Moses failed him not. He raised up in that city a most faithful friend, who heartily sympathised with him and aided him in every way, to the very last day of his life, in his work of preaching the Gospel. We refer to our beloved brother, C. J. Baker, of Kansas City, Mo., whose paper

in this memoir gives some interesting details. The work spread and extended to several places outside of Chicago, and a few assemblies were formed besides those in the city. By-and-by Mr. Baker moved to Missouri, and there began to circulate, in every way he knew, the truth he had received. The Lord gave much blessing in Kansas City and many places in that part of the country—blessing that abides. Our father moved out to the Pacific coast, and opened up the work there. But we need not go into details. Suffice it to say that he went on to the end pushing out to new fields and preaching the Gospel where none had gone before. Others, of course, followed in almost every case; but he "blazed" the way. Sometimes he used to encourage young men in this pioneering path by saying, "Go on, brethren, break up the ground; by-and-by there will be plenty men along to make slopes and plant flowers—let us keep at the breaking-up."

The hardships involved in this pioneering life he was able to endure without any trouble. In fact, he thoroughly enjoyed it. He was naturally of a most happy disposition, and used to say, in speaking of his life, that he thought he had had more "fun" out of life than most men. His chief delight in aggressive work was a tent. It was to him the symbol of Gospel pioneering, and he fairly revelled in it. The work involved he never begrudged; and even if his companion was a young man, he always carried the heavy end if he could or if the young man would allow him. He has scrubbed hall floors, swept them, dusted them,

and done everything else needed; and, in fact, there was nothing about the work he hesitated to put his hand to. As to food, the plainest fare at such times suited him and satisfied him. He was exceedingly fond of being alone when not actually engaged in the work, and for this reason preferred to live in a room of his own. Many times we have heard him speak of the good sense of the great woman of Shunem, who said to her husband, in connection with the prophet Elisha, "Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed and a table and a stool and a candlestick; and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither." He said she understood the need of a man of God, that he should have a little place of his own where he could have time and opportunity to be with God, away from the ordinary course of the life of the family with which he was staying, and away from the endless "talk, talk, talk" (quoting his own words) that generally went on.

He was perhaps the most industrious man we have ever known. He usually visited all day and preached every night, as long as his strength permitted. "Publicly and from house to house" was his motto; and right faithfully he stuck to it up to the end. But he did not neglect the reading of the Word. On the contrary, he was a most constant reader and student of it, and he had no patience with preachers who did not do so. There was nothing disgusted him more than an address at a conference that indicated a lack

of faithful study of the Word. On one occasion a friend, who was somewhat wearied with the sameness of some conference meeting he had attended, wrote to him asking him the cause of this. His reply was—

"You ask a question, 'Why is it there is so little fresh at these conferences?' I answer—

"1st. Lack of consecutive study of the Word of God by the preachers.

"2nd. Lack of godliness among them. If they were going on with God, they would be discovering new things every day.

"3rd. Laziness. 'The hand of the diligent maketh rich.'

"Yours by grace,

"DONALD ROSS."

As to his preaching, one thing may safely be said—he imitated none. His special delight was the Gospel, and he hardly ever closed an address, even to believers, without making an appeal to the unsaved. But he was not content with seeing people saved. He sought to give forth the whole counsel of God, as far as he knew it. What God said as to the life of a believer in every department, what He said as to baptism and separation from worldly religious systems, and gathering in simplicity around the Lord Jesus Christ to remember Him in the breaking of bread, and otherwise maintain a testimony in the world, he fully taught, and everywhere taught. As to these things he never faltered to the end of his days. There was

no looking backward in this respect. But he was not narrow in his sympathies; on the contrary, he was delighted wherever the work of the Lord was being done, and thankful to God for any light anywhere. He would go to almost any clean place to preach; and in his last days in Savannah he went once a week to a mission where he was invited to preach the Gospel. There the Lord owned his word, and he sought to lead those who made a profession into all the truth he knew himself, as they were able to bear it.

He loved the Word of God, and read it constantly. Many times, before going to bed, he would read chapter after chapter without stopping. He said it soothed him and prepared him for sleep. This love for the Word came out in a pathetic way during an illness he had a few years ago. He was too weak to read, so he just took up the Book and held it in his arms, as a mother would her babe or a sick child her dearest toy, quieted and soothed by having the source of his delight in health so close to him in sickness.

The last few years of his life he was often sick, and almost always uncomfortable. But his spirit was undaunted and his fire unquenched, so far as the work of God was concerned. He felt his inability to go on as usual very much, and chafed against it a good deal. But the Lord had His purpose in these times. On one occasion he was much distressed and cast down. He told the writer that it seemed to him that his work all came before him like a heap of rubbish, and he

shed bitter tears over what he termed a wasted life. God had given him such opportunities of serving Him, and he had responded so basely, that he could only hide his face in shame before Him. His only consolation was that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. When anyone gave out the hymn, "Must I go, and empty-handed?" he frequently interrupted by saying, "Yes, we'll all have to go empty-handed, when it comes to the time to go."

In 1901 he returned to Chicago to live, after having spent some years in Kansas City in association with Mr. Baker. We felt then that he was done, and would have liked him to take it quietly for the rest of his days. But he could not do this, and kept up his work in every way that he could. In 1902 he again visited his native land, principally, we believe, to see the spot where God met him many years before. He had, however, to return home sooner than he meant to. Just before leaving Scotland, he wrote to a brother in England, bidding him farewell. In that letter he says, "I met many saints in Scotland since I came to it, and have been thus reminded of old times and past battles. I thank Him for each and all of them.

* * * * * *

"Am not well, and never expect to be better till the resurrection.

"There are many doors in this country open for me, but cannot go into them. We're going to the Coronation shortly—expect you'll be there also.

* * * * * *

"My work is almost done, and am not sorry for that, but very much so for its poor quality.

"I'll meet you before the throne above, for ever with the Lord.

"Brother Chapman is gone, and I'm going.

"With love in Christ Jesus and prayer for you and the work.

"DONALD ROSS."

"Good-bye."

Closing Days and Rest with Christ.

"They . . . rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

SOMETIME after returning to America he went to Savannah to try to "fight the devil once more," as he put it. He could get out during the winter there, and he dreaded the confinement in the house should he remain in Chicago. He got along fairly well until February, and was beginning to think of returning home when he was overtaken by the trouble that closed his life. His desire to die in harness was gratified, for he got his death-blow when returning from a meeting. It had turned somewhat cold during the evening, and he was not dressed warmly enough. He was ministered to by the saints in Savannah to their utmost ability, and when he went to the hospital we were telegraphed to, as the disease that had fastened on him had become dangerously acute. When we reached his bed-side he recognised us at once, and in answer to our query as to his condition, replied that he was suffering dreadfully, but almost shouted out in triumph, "It's all right." In the course of the afternoon, he took the writer into

his arms on the bed beside him, and held him there. He was not able to speak, but occasionally turned his eyes upwards with the light of heavenly anticipation shining brightly in them. He prayed sometimes, but we could only hear the words "Lord" and "God," and we prayed too that he might speedily be released from the pain that again and again convulsed his frame. Suddenly, and without any special struggle, his breathing stopped, and he was "absent from the body and present with the Lord."

For this we were not prepared (is one ever ready at such a time?), and it was a dreadful shock to realise that he had really gone from us. But the doctor and the nurse and even the negro orderly in the hospital sought to comfort and console us by telling us how well prepared he was for such an event. He had spoken to them all, faithfully and lovingly, when he came into the hospital, and told them as to himself that he was going home to the Lord who had died for him. Thus to the end he was occupied in telling of the Saviour of the lost, whom he dearly loved.

We took the remains back to Chicago, and there they rest in Forest Home Cemetery, on the banks of the Desplaines river. Mr. Gillett, of Valparaiso, his first acquaintance in the West, spoke words of comfort at the funeral. Many friends were gathered at the house, and some of his favourite hymns were sung. "What a Friend we have in Jesus" and "I will sing of my Redeemer" were two of them. The kindness of the people of the Lord was very great. They

were the only friends he sought in his lifetime, and death only makes the reality and strength of such links more manifest.

At the head of his grave we have placed a plain granite stone. On it is the simple and, we think, fitting inscription—

DONALD ROSS. 1824-1903.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."—John iii. 3.

Letters.

WE have culled the following letters from his letter-book. They speak for themselves, showing the man in a way that no writing about him could do. What he was, as seen in those letters, he was to the end of his days, so we have confined ourselves to such as will exhibit some trait of his inward life. He never kept a journal, and seldom sought to diagnose his inward experiences either to himself or others. Nor did he care for such writings. He was essentially a man of action, and delighted in the work of the Lord. His letters as a rule were more like military despatches than devotional writings, and those printed here are a fair sample of what he ever wrote and ever felt even to the end.

C. W. R.

To One of the Missionaries.

October 25th, 1862.

You left on me the impression that your soul is less permeated with that thing called Love than it ought to be. Believe me, until you get broken down and ground, and your scraps of poetic rubbish

squeezed out of you, and the Word of God put in its place, and the whole mollified with the ointment of love, your labours will be to a great extent useless. Now try to get at this. I beseech of you, spend more time on your knees, and when you are walking, instead of reciting poetry, *be praying*.

To a Candidate for Employment in the Mission Work.

November 27th, 1862.

* * * * * *

There are a few points on which the Directors would like more explicit information, namely—

First—As far as you know the time, place, and instrument (if any) of your conversion.

Second—Are you aware of your labours being blessed to the conversion of any soul?

To the Same after Employment.

December 16th, 1862.

* * * * * *

Two things I wish you to attend to as elements of usefulness. *First*, living near to God. Although all is of grace, yet please notice that only persons having Christianity of the highest type are used by God for the conversion of souls. Many there are labouring for Christ and seeing no fruit, who take refuge under the sovereignty of God, whereas if they would examine their own private conduct, they would find a key to the want of success. *Second*, a mind having

the capacity to lay all nature under the tax of supplying pictures, allegories, and illustrations, in order to unfold spiritual things, and in the proportion of people's ignorance, these illustrations are both acceptable and useful. So men use pictures for children.

To a Missionary Seeking Increase of Salary.

February 7th, 1863.

* * * * * *

There will be a meeting of the Directors in a fortnight or so, and, if you wish, the matter will be submitted and deliberated on by them.

There is a bit of flattery to myself in your letter. *I do not need such.* I want to do my duty, and I do not care whether it is liked or not. I care nothing for the applause or frown of any man.

There is a word that rings in my ears concerning you ever since I heard you preach. It is Prov. xvi. 18, "Pride goeth before a fall." Do not think me cruel. I see you are in danger of losing your balance.

* * * * * *

To a Missionary who was feeling his Barrenness.

February 16th, 1863.

I received your note of the 9th. I am sorry there is no more doing in Buckie. Let us just put the business before God. Tell Him that there are souls going to hell, and if He does not save them Himself, none

else will or can. If He pleases to work by us, here we are; and if He does not, may He send forth labourers into His own vineyard.

* * * * * *

To a Missionary.

July 11th, 1863.

Give my respects to Mrs. M'Kay. Tell her to pray that I may be more holy, that nothing may find place in my soul but Christ and Him crucified. Tell all the Lord's people to pray for me. Tell them also to pray for the Mission. Moreover, say unto them, one and all, that often I think of them, and try to realise that we shall spend (by grace) a very holy and happy eternity together, basking in the sunshine of God's full flood of redeeming love.

But oh! are there not many more yet dead, in a state of nature, and they do not know their danger? Pray for them and be faithful to them.

Tell them altogether that nothing troubles me but SIN.*

His Reputation.

September 14th, 1863.

I am very glad to hear of your well-being and of Wick in general. I have often thought of Wick since I left it, and often I have wondered if the Lord

*The word "sin" in the original letter is written in large letters, and underscored two or three times.

should send me again. Whether He ever condescends to send me or not, may He send by whom He will send.

As to Mr. K—— speaking against us or me, I have no doubt whatever if he knew me as I know myself he would have much more to say, and if he knew me as God knows me he would speak worse and worse. I believe we have more seals of being sent of God than he has, but may God give us grace to make ourselves of no reputation.

To a Discontented Missionary.

January 28th, 1864.

You seem to think public speaking your special calling, and therefore you are unhappy when, instead, you are in other work. In your last letter this discontent found expression. You ask my advice and prayers. In the latter you always had a share. In the former I indulged in my last note, and gave you not only my advice but God's command in the words that flashed across my mind in reading yours. The words were, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

From this note just received it is more evident than before that your discontent is very great. You say that someone has shut your mouth, but that God has not. What nonsense! If God wants you to speak, who can hinder? In a postscript you say that "the sword you got from God at first was a sharp one, that it is grown blunt and requires again to be

sharpened and furbished. Oh that it may be sharpened to make a sore slaughter." I am afraid that such a use of Scripture is bordering on blasphemy (it is nonsense at best). The sharp sword for spiritual execution is the Word of God. It does not require sharpening or furbishing. It always is the two-edged sword, sharp and quick. It was you who gave up wielding it and substituted something else for it.

The simple meaning of the whole is that you have got such a high opinion of yourself as a public speaker that you have concluded you are in the wrong place when other and different duties are demanded of you. I am sorry that you are unwilling to be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. If you had the low estimate of your own powers that John the Baptist had of his, you would say with him (instead of growling at the sphere in which Providence has placed you) that you are unworthy to unloose Christ's shoes. Let us then have the humility that does not explode itself in empty professions of having it, but in receiving with thankfulness any position God in His providence gives us. An old godly divine made a remark somewhat like this, that an angel from Heaven, if so commanded, would feel honoured in sweeping the streets of London.

Such persons as are useful in one thing are generally useful in anything, and such as are not useful in a *one talent* position would never be useful in a *ten talent* position.

I am perfectly sick of writing you on these and kindred subjects. I cannot endure the nonsense you write.

Pleasing the People or Converting them.

February 5th, 1867.

It is well the people prize the meetings. Always bear in mind, however, that one person brought to Christ is worth, or rather is a greater fact, than the pleasing of five thousand people. There are many who are pleased with preaching that never touches them, just because of that circumstance.

Always bear in mind that if sleepy believers and lawless people are pleased with preaching, it is a very clear indication that the preaching is not what it ought to be—there is something wrong with it. Make it a point to have the people converted. Any amount of teaching that comes short of that is a loss and a snare. Remember also that the preaching which is blessed to conversion is the only preaching which is useful to believers. The two things go together: *sleepy believers and no conversions*, or else *lively and spiritually minded believers and conversions.*

A Turning-point in connection with Hiring Missionaries.

July 26th, 1867.

It is agreed to accept your services in connection with this society for the Banff mission district.

The committee are under a present engagement to each of their agents. That engagement must be carried out literally. The amount of salary was agreed on. It is desirable, however, that there should be a change in that matter—namely, that in the case of each missionary there should be no stipulated sum. It is intended to continue to pay as much as ever to the missionaries, if the Lord will place the funds at the society's disposal; if we have not the funds, the committee reserve the right of being absolved from paying these sums. You are the first to whom this proposal is made; all the other missionaries will eventually glide into the same groove.

It is not the intention or desire of the committee to lessen salaries; they would rather increase the amount. But they wish two things: *first*, that men wishing to join the society for a living be discouraged; *second*, that all the missionaries feel their dependence on God, equally for temporal and spiritual mercies; all in the society will thus be brought into direct contact with God Himself. You do God's work, and He will see as to the other things.

The committee think there is no doubt the society will be upheld at or beyond its present income by this mode of procedure. If the servant of the Lord has bread and water here and Heaven hereafter, with the unspeakable honour of being a fellow-worker with God on his way to it, he may well be content.

To Two Missionaries sent out to Work together.

March 29th, 1867.

To-day received both your letters. Let not the one recriminate against the other. I cannot tell how sorry I am that so much labour and money are expended in these villages without conversions.

When I sent Mr. D— there, I had two things in view—*first*, that he himself might catch fire (I know he didn't have it); and, *second*, that Mr. H— might get some ballast. In other words, I wanted H— to get ballast, and D— to get sail. But, instead of being thus useful to one another, the ballast and the sail have cast out. The sail says, 'You, ballast, what a hindrance you are!' And the ballast says, 'You, sail, you are daft altogether.' Instead of this, you ought to understand that the one is to steady and the other to move.

But notice, zeal without knowledge is sometimes useful, but knowledge without zeal is of no use.

To the Same.

May 1st, 1867.

Try to understand that our Mission exists for conversions, and if there be not such, our great object is not accomplished. Whatever else is accomplished matters little to us.

Our society cannot keep long on trial any person, whatever they may be otherwise, if conversions do not follow. If such results be not attained, the com-

mittee is satisfied that the parties engaged do not stand in the counsel of God.

The following letter, written to a clergyman who opposed the work of the N.E.C. Mission, was afterwards printed and circulated by the late Mr. Duncan Matheson:—

April 12th, 1867.

REV. SIR,—For a long while past I have entertained a desire to trouble you with a note, but I have always delayed until now, and would probably continue to do so, were it not that Mr. Scroggie called at my house and cleared up some things to me.

You have expressed oftener than once some suspicion of my character. Were it not that the cause of God and your own well-being is concerned in the matter, I would not write even now.

The chief insinuations thrown out by you may be classed under the four following heads:—

First, that I am a Morisonian. This I deny most emphatically. Their chief error I understand to be the following—namely, "no special work of the Spirit." I believe in the absolute necessity for the Holy Spirit—not the Spirit's influence, but Himself. The influence of the Spirit has never been promised by God as far as I am aware. It is the Comforter, not the Comforter's influence. There never was and never will be a conversion without Him. There are Morisonians theoretically and there are Morisonians practically. The latter are those who do not meet with the

saints to pray for the power of the Spirit, and who pay more attention to the composition of a sermon than to the presence of the Spirit to make it effectual. The secret chambers of the people will bear witness as to who are real Morisonians. There is no doubt that they who wrestle not in prayer for the presence of the Spirit are Morisonians, as well as they who indulge in things calculated to grieve and dishonour the Spirit.

Second. You assert that I went to a part of your parish to hold meetings without apprising you of the fact. You are aware that Newburgh was one of our villages for two years at least previous to my being in it. The first occasion on which I went was that the missionary there arranged for a soiree in the village. You were invited to preside at that soiree, but did not go. I also, with two or three gentlemen from Aberdeen, was invited, and when going out to it I promised that if you should be present I would give one pound to the poor. This I did, believing you could not face me. Next morning I promised the people who strongly pressed me to do so, to go out and address some meetings. This I did; and you know what you said both of me and my meetings. God manifested His approval and you your disapproval.

Third. You asserted that I said you were an unconverted minister. This I deny. I have seen in my day so many of the Lord's people doing the Devil's work, that anything said or done by you never satisfied me as to whether you were a believer or not.

Fourth. You assert that I have alienated the affections of some of your people from you. This I deny. I never did. They who are away were gone three months before I knew of it. I never was consulted in the matter. What the people say is that they lost confidence in you. Is it not very ominous that the praying people in Newburgh think less of you than ever they did in their careless days, and that the ungodly, the Sabbath-breakers, and the drunkards esteem you more highly than before, because they think you are their friend, and oppose conversions?

Regarding the Morisonianism with which you charge me, let me add that I believe in the perseverance of saints, or rather in the perseverance of God's dealings with them. I believe in particular redemption, and, alas! there is overwhelming evidence to prove original and universal depravity.

After I have thus given a detailed denial to these charges, I hope for your own sake that you will drop the practice of evil-speaking. Anything you say cannot harm me, but what you say without evidence will harm yourself. The only proper course for you is to confess your fault, first to God, and He will pardon you, and second to your own people, and you will be restored to their affections.

I entertain no ill-feeling whatever towards you in this matter. Yet I cannot close my eyes to the fact that through your influence many of your people lost the opportunity of the revival, and, alas! may have lost it for ever. There is a judgment to come. Take

heed lest you appear with a very solemn charge against you.

To Mr. Brand, Treasurer of the Mission.

April 17th, 1867.

Another year is come to an end. One thought strikes me, namely—As I am the special object of abhorrence to the ministers all around, and daily becoming more so, it may be just as profitable for this society that a person less an object of their hatred should be where I am. I am perfectly ready to face anything. Yet it may be as useful for the society that the convictions of my successor be not so decided.

To the Same, and of a similar character.

October 12th, 1867.

I am just home one hour ago from Banffshire. Did not know until I came home that *honourable mention* was made of me or my letter to Rev. Mr. C—— at the Synod. Seeing, however, that that letter may be an embarrassment to the Mission, I beg to relieve the directors from all difficulty by resigning. *This I hereby do*, and continue only until my successor is appointed, and claim the liberty of leaving at the latest on November 10th, 1867. I will, if you require, give a copy of the letter in question. I do not withdraw one sentence in it—nor can I honestly do so. My path in the matter of revival is to me clear, and I mean to keep it.

To Two Missionaries just Beginning.

March 17th, 1868.

In beginning the work of the society it is well that you should have clear and distinct instructions, as far as man can give you them. There is no doubt that the cautiousness commended by experience will not commend itself to beginners; nevertheless, wisdom is needed.

Our object is the conversion of sinners to God. In so far as our society comes short of this, it falls short of its work. The question then is, What is the most likely way of having this accomplished? I answer, in order to this, two things are needed: *first*, the favour of God must be secured, or the labour will be fruitless; and, *second*, the ear of men must be secured, or they will not come under the sound of the truth.

For the favour of God two things are required: *first*, uprightness of conduct; and, *second*, devotedness to God. The promise is, "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

To secure the favour of men who support the Mission, the following things are required: first, that you be courteous and respectful to all; second, that your conduct be blameless; and, third, that you have earnestness, spirituality, laboriousness, and entire freedom from all show, sham, and pretentiousness. To get the ear of the people whose benefit you seek, re-

member you come in contact with them in two ways. *First*, in visiting. In this show that you care for them, by praying for and with them in endearing terms. As many of the people are anxious for an occasion to oppose, do not for a while speak your own words, but read the bare Word of God, and leave it with them without comment Then in your meetings: Let them at present not last longer than one hour and a quarter. There is nothing more calculated to drive people away than long meetings, unless the addresses are both able and interesting. Have interesting addresses, free from all commonplace and slang phrases, and *sappy* services. Come to your meetings with your faces shining like Moses' when he came from the presence of God.

As both of you are young in the work, see that you do not try to imitate any person. Say what you have to say, and then stop. For three months at least never give an address longer than fifteen minutes. Have one special idea at a time. Let your hearers carry away the one idea. Do not speak on all things. If the people were hungry, matters would be different. Do not tell your own past wildness; at present it would be injurious.

May God bless you!

To a Missionary.

June 24th, 1868.

Your letter seems written in a vindictive spirit, and smacks, methinks, as much of man's spirit as of the tender pity of Jesus. See the following sentence:

"I am determined, God helping me, if they don't come out to the meetings, I will let them have hell in their houses. So much for Hell." I would advise you to be more with Jesus, and *let your own bones be more broken.* Then you will not only be quite as faithful, but more sappy. Rest assured that preaching Hell is only one side of the question.

It is strange I discover here at home when the missionary is in the "converting mood." I discover this in two ways: first, in my praying for him and his district; and, second, by the letters he writes.

To a Missionary.

December 5th, 1868.

Methinks it is clear that you are not in your own soul such as to be successful meanwhile, and you are not dashing enough ever to make a very aggressive instrumentality.

I commend you to spend Monday in prayer, in order to get into a right state, and after that you must cultivate activity and punctuality. When you give out a hymn, do not sit down like a slothful old man. I have been grieved to see a young fellow like you leading a hymn sitting. Avoid sloth; it will be your ruin. Pray, preach, and visit.

To a Missionary.

January 22nd, 1870.

It appears to me that your labours are a failure to some extent. I believe the reasons for this to be two:

first, the want of the Holy Ghost. You must be able to draw, or rather ought to be able to draw, a distinction between nervous excitement and the Holy Ghost. Believe me, if you had the power and illumination of the Spirit, there would be conversions. Second, the want of wisdom. You are scaring the people away from you, instead of drawing them. You ought to begin with such truth as the people could hear, and come out gradually with more and more. Jesus had much to say to His disciples, but they could not bear it all at one time (John xvi., 12).

To a Preacher.

April 25th, 1871.

I am sorry to learn you are so unwell. No doubt you will be the better of a rest, for you are injuring yourself, and partly needlessly. Well, from the 1st of May to the 1st of July, rest yourself, and by that time your system will no doubt improve, and your strength will return.

During these two months you will also, I hope, learn to make no reference to your enemies publicly, and to preach guardedly that your enemies may not be able thus to bring you and others into trouble.

I was sorry to learn from a friend of yours and of mine too, that on last Sunday evening you referred publicly to H—— M——. Surely it is time for you to learn that that way of it is not God's way of it. I thought that the warnings you have received would

make you wise ere now. You must know that your unguarded words are bringing a great deal of trouble on me, and now they are sounded all through the British dominions in the "London Weekly Review," as extracted from the "Free Press." Most likely they will meet me in England too. I hope, however, that these two months will be beneficial—and I may say that, if you are not willing to abstain from these improper epithets and references in public, I don't want you to begin even on July 1st. I write this with both sorrow and pain, but cannot shrink from my duty.

To a Preacher.

June 21st, 1871.

I was telling you the other day that a coat cannot be made with *needles* only—thread is needed. I have no doubt you are at present passing through a valuable training.

Well, I am requested to remove you from ——. They are afraid that the chapel will be taken from them for your sake.

This is painful, but no doubt God sees you need it, to empty you of yourself, and make you study the Word and send you to God for sap.

To a Preacher.

June 21st, 1871.

I was very much disappointed when I learned that instead of being at your work on Saturday, you were

miles away gossiping. Now, I think you do this too often. Any time you have to spare you should give to the study of the Word, to prayer, and to visitation; and if you do this, I'll not be getting so many complaints about your not being able to preach anything but to the ungodly.

I have to say a few things to you. *First*, study the Word; train your mind to study. *Second*, you are too abrupt. You must learn caution, or you are sure to send the people away from hearing you. *Third*, try to learn something of what God says to His own children.

To a Preacher.

May 18th, 1872.

Your present preaching does not appear to me to be profitable in quality. Instead of preaching the central truths of the Word, you go off to the *chopping truth*, and are now too apt to be taken up with little things so as to magnify them to the exclusion of the big things. This is unprofitable.

Your preaching tastes to me and to others very dry, and seems without the Holy Ghost. If I am not mistaken, the Bible is become to you a magazine of truth instead of a mirror in which to see God. Then, your style and manner produce the feeling that you are animated by a vindictive spirit. There is a lack of that softness and tenderness of feeling which seems to me essential to success.

Now, I beg you to get over it, and, in order to this, you must get out of your intellectual and fanciful theories of truth, and begin to spend the half of the time you spend at your Bible in two things: *first*, speaking to the ungodly about their souls; and, *second*, on your knees with Jesus. I must say I never heard you say a good word about Him yet. Your truth is one-sided. This is a terrible mistake. No doubt whatever, your present style will lead you to be a *stucco Christian*, without any heat or feelings at all. God keep you from it. This is hard writing, but God demands honesty at my hands.

To One who had begun a Meeting in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

September 1st, 1871.

Let me urge this upon you, since you are free to walk as closely by the Book as possible—that, however orderly your matters are, if you grieve the Holy Ghost your order will be that of death. God preserve you from that.

There are other subjects on which I beg to say a few words.

First. Make believers' baptism a matter for forbearance. Let the basis of fellowship with you be *faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Second. If you have any poor among you, let them be taken off the Poor Board at once, and let the Church support them.

Third. Let every member among you lay by regularly every first day of the week—as the Lord prospered him or her—not less than a tenth at any rate. Put away the plate. Let a neat, decent bag be made, and let each member take it up and put in it what he or she likes, so that the people may be thrown entirely on principle and not on public opinion.

Fourth. I see the great defect of your kind of church everywhere is that they sink down, glorying in their purity, and become mere instruments for proselytising instead of labouring for the lost. Let each teacher with his assistants have two meetings every week for preaching the Gospel to the ungodly, and all this quite independent of your church meetings. In this manner you become a *grand missionary institution.*

Fifth. And you ought never to forget that the present state of matters in —— and other parts where we laboured was brought about at other people's expense chiefly—*not at yours.* So you ought to be at the expense of bringing about the same results in other places, if you think it is God's work. On this point I would be more free were I in a different position from that I at present occupy. Conscience only makes me say this.

Reminiscences of Fellow-Labourers.

1.—By Donald Munro, Toronto, Canada.

THE great apostle of the Gentiles, referring to himself and his ministry, said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And of few could these words be repeated with greater truthfulness than of our esteemed and beloved brother, Mr. Donald Ross, now with the Lord.

Whether we view him in relation to his Christian experience, or his labour as a servant of Christ, all was unique. He was a chosen vessel, fitted physically, mentally, and spiritually by the hand of the Master workman for the place assigned him in the Church, and the work to which he was called, and which he fulfilled.

I remember seeing a diagram of the Gulf Stream issuing out of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. It divides into various channels, yet the waters in each hold together, never mixing with the cooler waters of the Atlantic, until they wash the coasts of Ireland and other parts of Europe, bringing warmth and fertility wherever they reach. Jesus said, "He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers

of living water." Did not the God of all grace open up a channel for the forth-flowing of the living waters in the conversion of Donald Ross when a lad of fifteen, on the top of that solitary hill? How interesting and profitable it would be to follow its onward and ever-widening course from that little beginning in the miller's household: from Ross-shire to Edinburgh, from Edinburgh to New Mains, in the south of Scotland, from thence to Aberdeen, from which it specially widened out to many parts of Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and, probably, other lands, carrying with it, like the Gulf Stream, life, warmth, and verdure, and a definiteness in testimony for God not everywhere in these days to be found.

When Mr. Ross first went to Aberdeen to act as superintendent and secretary for the North-East Coast Mission, there was no missionary connected with the mission at the time and no money in the treasury. His duty was, first, to go inland, or wherever he saw fit, and bring the object of the mission before what is called "the Christian public," and thus raise funds to carry on the work. Next, to establish stations as funds increased, and to select missionaries, appoint their stations, and generally superintend their work. As he went about advocating the claims of the mission, I am not aware that he was ever known to occupy a public meeting or spend an evening for that purpose, but always preached the Gospel, doing the rest by private visitation during the day. By-and-by the

character of his preaching became known: souls were saved, saints restored and revived. Where there were *living* ministers and a few living souls in their congregations, they hailed his coming with delight; but in the majority of instances this was not the case. Most of the ministers were unconverted, and so was the majority of the congregations. They were quite satisfied to keep their dead religious machinery going; they did not want their sleeping consciences disturbed by being told in thundering tones that unconverted ministers and decent communicants not born again were going to the same hell, and needed the same salvation as the drunken fisherman of the coast. They rebelled and stormed, and Mr. Ross's visits to such communities became a terror.

By the worldly-wise this was considered not good policy for one raising money for the cause to which he was devoted. But he had learned that God could only approve of truth and honesty, and, furthermore, that He did not use carnal policy or what is called "common sense" in furthering His work. Mr. Ross often exhorted God's people to put their common sense in their pockets when the things of God were in question. So he went on walking in the light that God had given him; and still the mission prospered. and was marvellously used of God in doing His work.

Frequently young men, some of them preparing for the regular ministry, would present themselves as candidates for the mission. The first question put by Mr. Ross in the examination was always, "When were

you born again?" That satisfactorily answered, other questions as to soundness in the faith followed. In addition to this, he always sought an opportunity to hear them pray and preach, once at least, oftener if possible. Frequently those who passed well up to this point got no further. In such cases the verdict as to his prayer was, "He has not the smell of God"; and as to the preaching, "It has no teeth." But if they gave evidence of being godly, and their preaching had unction and grip calculated to reach the heart and rouse the conscience, how gladly they were accepted, and tenderly counselled to walk with God as the only way to real usefulness. But for the smart young men, who could deliver nice addresses savouring only of pride and conceit, he had no place. How he did wither them up! After they had finished, and thought they had done very well, he would take them aside and solemnly say, "It was good for neither man nor beast." If he heard of anyone who might be a likely candidate, he would ask, "Has he got the revival fire in him? It's no use trying to put the forest on fire with an icicle." He thus gathered around him a band of young men after his own heart—men who made it their business to seek the glory of God and the salvation of souls. He often visited the places where missionaries were stationed, and held special meetings. Revivals were frequent at these special meetings. During those wonderful years of revival from 1859 to 1870, there was a continuous work of grace going on somewhere along the north-east coast occupied by the

mission—often in two or three towns or villages at the same time. Thousands of souls were led to Christ; many of them have gone to be with Him, while not a few remain to this day as living witnesses of the mighty power and grace of God manifested in those days. One of the scenes of that work was the village of Ferryden, where we have often heard Mr. Ross say that he believed there was not a house but God entered and some one was saved, in not a few instances whole households. And few boats went to sea that did not have worship, with united reading of the Word and prayer, after the nets were cast. Gourdon, Bervie, Portlethen, Cove, Footdee, Newburgh, Collieston, Cruden, Boddam, Peterhead, St. Fergus, St. Combs, Cairnbulg, Inverallochy, Fraserburgh, Rosehearty, Macduff, Banff, Portsoy, Cullen, Portknockie, Portessie, Buckie, Lossiemouth, Burghead, Findhorn, Nairn, Fort-George, Rosemarkie, Tarbet, Tain, Brora, Helmsdale, and Wick were all places where God wrought in mighty power and grace.

In some of these places—particularly in Ferryden, Footdee, Cairnbulg, and Inverallochy—such was the great power of God with the Word preached, and the impressions of eternal realities that fell upon the people, that all secular employment was stopped, and for weeks scarcely a boat put out to sea. The one all-absorbing question with young and old was, "What must I do to be saved?" Meetings were held daily, afternoon and evening, continuing often till midnight and after.

All who knew Mr. Ross, and have heard him preach, have been struck with the fact that he was a very close observer of both men and things. As he passed along, whether in the bustling, crowded city, or in the quiet of the country, nothing escaped his notice. As a result, his memory was stored with an endless fund of circumstances, incidents, and anecdotes, which he fittingly used in his loved work of preaching. But he was very, very far from what one might call "an anecdote preacher." He never had, like some men we have known, a notebook full of anecdotes, which are systematically placed each in their own niche in their carefully prepared addresses, and then pathetically told, with the result that their audiences are brought to tears and smiles by turn, their natural sympathies and emotions stirred and often in the after-meeting some of them intellectually reasoned into a profession of salvation, their consciences never having been awakened or ploughed up by the ploughshare of the Word of God in the hand of the Spirit. No; Mr. Ross was a man of the Book. He had implicit faith in the efficacy of the Word of God. We have heard him say that in his earlier days he read and studied not a few standard works on theology. But as he went on with God and His work, these lost their attraction for him. The Word in its majesty, grandeur, and perfection commanded his whole attention. He honoured it; he loved it; he read it. It was his meditation by day and by night, during all his waking hours. The result was, his heart

and mind were stored and filled with it. The foundation and framework of all his addresses was the Word of the living God. Whilst he drew and riveted the attention of the most careless by the use of incidents and often the most quaint illustrations, usually from his own experience and observation, yet those tremendous appeals which some of us can never forget were appeals from the Word of God, of which it is said, "Is not My word like a fire, saith the Lord, and like the hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Consciences were awakened, convictions of sin were deep. Although he loved to meet and speak with anxious souls, he seldom if ever reasoned with them. Usually he brought before them some Gospel text, and sought to press it upon their minds, and prayed for them. And how often we have known awakened sinners get deliverance just when he was praying. Under such preaching it was almost impossible to remain indifferent. Few, indeed, were able to do so. They were either awakened and saved, or the enmity of the natural heart was stirred, and they became angry, and left to become scoffers against the truth.

The hospitable home in Alma Cottage, Aberdeen, will long be remembered by the missionaries and evangelists, as well as other young men, who were still working with their hands, but whose hearts were burning for souls. How many of us could say of him, and in a special way of his beloved wife—They have been "succourers of many, and of myself also." Those who were privileged to gather in that home

(many of them are now with the Lord) will never forget those meetings, especially the hours, or sometimes the half-hours, upstairs in his "office," or what he usually called his "sanctum sanctorum." How he "exhorted and comforted and charged us as a father doth his children," never failing to remind us that preaching, however clear, if not in the Holy Spirit, is worse than useless. And never were those informal gatherings closed without having prayer together. It will not be known till "that Day" what God wrought in that little attic-room, where desires already begotten by the Spirit to win souls for Christ were strengthened, and where such desires were begotten for the first time, and all made to feel the importance of the words, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." In that humble room impetus was given to lives that have since been honoured and used of God. He never failed to tell young preachers what he considered faulty in their preaching. If they were godly and humble, how kindly and gently it was done; but, on the other hand, if they savoured of pride and self-importance, the rebuke was given with plainness verging on severity. We have heard him say that some preachers were like a military man who erected a battery, but never fired a shot from it. He would say, "Always have a text or portion of the Word, lay down the truth it contains as the battery, and then fire away in every direction." As already said, during those years the North-East Coast Mission extended,

and God greatly used it, not only in the conversion of non-churchgoers and drunken fishermen, but also many a church-member. The conversion of drunkards was considered a good work by all and hailed with praise, but when respectable church members found out they had never been "born again," and were led to Christ, and filled with joy and peace which they could not contain, the news spread quickly, and often drew forth the bitterest opposition from unconverted ministers and church members. Mr. Ross often told the following incident:—One morning, leaving his home in Aberdeen to go on a journey by an early train, he passed a shop-front newly painted. He noticed the words, "Beware of the paint." He got to the station, and, while buying his ticket, he noticed the words over the wicket, "Beware of pickpockets." He entered the train, and, as they drew out of the city, he noticed two clergymen in the compartment in front of him. By and by he heard the following conversation:—"I hear you have had a revival in your church." "Yes, we have." "Was there good done?" "Yes; there were a number converted." And then one added, "Beware you of the revival; it has introduced into my church an element of discord that I have never since been able to harmonize, let me do my very best." "Beware of paint." "Beware of pickpockets." "Beware of the revival." Of the three warnings, the last was by far the most interesting to him, and afforded him food for meditation upon a subject already pressing itself heavily upon him.

He had learned that the Lord Jesus had not come to send peace on earth but rather "division" (Luke xii. 51), that there can be no harmony between light and darkness, and no accord between life and death. Wherever the Gospel of God comes in the Holy Spirit, it makes division, alike in the community, in the family, and in dead churches. The effort of the clerical gentleman in front of him to harmonize the living and the dead was an impossibility, and so he warned his fellow-clergyman against "The Revival," so that he might enjoy the peacefulness of spiritual death in his church. Mr. Ross was learning, by painful experience, that such was the policy of men whose aim was the building up of their own "cause," instead of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls, that such men were doing more to deceive souls than the whisky shops, by building them up in a dead profession, and thus making them hope they were all right for eternity.

Mr. Ross was a member of what was known as the Free North Church, a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland in Aberdeen, of which Mr. George Campbell was minister. He was a saved man, who, in the early days of the revival, went into the work with heart and soul. He was greatly used of God, and stood no small measure of persecution for the Lord's sake. Mr. Ross was a member of this church with all good conscience, and believed most firmly in all its doctrines and traditions. As an example of this I may relate that, after his youngest child was

born, a well-known servant of the Lord, passing through the city, called to see him. During the conversation, he asked the following question—"Mr. Ross, are you going to have your baby christened?" To which the reply came, and that with emphasis, "I have had twelve children baptised already, and, if I were to have twelve more so would they all be."

But the mixed multitude of saved and lost forming the membership was a subject of deep soul-exercise to him. For years his hope had been that godly ministry would to a great extent remedy the evil and "purge out" the chaff. We have heard him relate how certain Scriptures were exercising him, very specially 1 Cor. v. 11—"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, *no not to eat.*" As the work of the Lord went on, the true condition of the Free Church, as well as that of other denominations, became more defined. While there were a few godly ministers among them, who went in heartily for the work of the Lord, there was a number who, through circumstances or policy, were squeezed into the revival for a time, but had no real heart in it. Mr. Ross used to say, "They were in the revival, but the revival had never got into them." Nay, in heart they would rather say, "Beware of the revival." By and by they began to antagonise it, as did by far the great majority everywhere, and in every denomination. The North-East Coast Mission was undenomi-

national, and was supported by all denominations. Its board of directors represented all the Churches, and their denominational connection was no question in engaging the missionaries. At their appointed stations they were to labour among all, showing no favouritism in that respect, although personally they might have their own church connection.

If the missionaries confined their labours to reforming drunkards and helping the ministers to build up their churches, all would be peaceful, and they would have the respect and praise of the religious leaders, but there could be nothing further from the mind of the superintendent than that, nor yet from the mind of the missionaries. Their one object was to get men and women saved, "delivered from the wrath to come." It is quite possible that men whose hearts were on fire, burning with zeal for the salvation of the lost, may not always have spoken or acted in the wisest way, but, sure enough, two things followed the missionaries along the whole line: souls were saved, and opposition, fierce and hot, was stirred up. At the monthly meetings of the directors, there were usually complaints laid on the table from ministers, south and north, of the sayings and doings of the missionaries for Mr. Ross to account for. He has often told some of us that he was between the missionaries and the directors, like the buffers between the railway cars. So, while there was the great joy of seeing the hand of the Lord, and souls saved, it was not all smooth sailing. Nay, very far from that. To him there was

the bitter as well as the sweet. There was not only the present sharing of the work and preaching of the Gospel, but the preparing and training for a higher path of service, and one more pleasing to God. Although that path was far from being yet in sight, at any rate the hope of purging the churches was becoming more and more hopeless every year.

So, with the buffeting without and the deep soul-exercise within, there came most unexpectedly the last time he ever sat down to remember the Lord, as a member of the Free Church, or any Church, but the Church which is the body of Christ. We have often heard him tell the circumstance. On a Lord's Day—the Sacrament Sunday in Aberdeen—he was sitting at the table in the Free North Church. "I happened to look around me," he said, "and what did I see but a whisky-seller on the one side of me and another on the other side, and thought to myself, 'I am surely in strange company.' The words, '*With such, no not to eat*,' came with great power. By my very presence with them I am encouraging them to think they are Christians, and thus helping the devil to lead them down to hell. I shall certainly never be found here again." And neither was he.

For two years, more or less, he never broke bread at all, with probably the exception of once at the Perth Conference, which was known to be unsectarian. They had one meeting on a week-day for the breaking of bread, but what commended it to him and others in pretty much the same condition was, *it was a select*

company. Thus by circumstances and Scripture, which, as far as he had light upon it, was always everything to him, was he being "*squeezed out*" of all denominations, as he used to say. Finally, early in 1870, he and several of the missionaries resigned their connection with the North-East Coast Mission.

He then began what was to be known as "The Northern Evangelistic Society." Its field was to be chiefly the northern inland towns and counties of Scotland. But there was liberty to go further if the Lord should so lead. There was really no formal organisation or set of rules drawn up. The directors were the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Mr. Ross was to be looked upon as superintendent in a subordinate way. There was no fund, and therefore there was no salary promised but what the Lord would send. But it was understood that all supplies that came would come through Mr. Ross. All this, of course, showed the darkness in which all were groping —but does it not also indicate the dawning of the clearer light which followed? The Word of God was becoming more and more precious, and hidden treasures were beginning to shine forth. The corruption of the denominations was coming clearer and clearer to view, and separation from *that* was becoming more and more definite. But God's plain, simple, beautiful path was yet in a measure hid from view. The blessing of God's people and the salvation of souls was with Mr. Ross a passion, and the only way to attain to these ends by himself and others was

godliness. This was deeply written in his heart by the Spirit of God, and it was the aim of his life and the burden of his preaching, and to him godliness meant *loyal obedience to all God's Word.*

In the summer of 1870 the writer received from Mr. Ross a letter telling of his soul exercise. He was in a country place in Aberdeenshire at the time, in the midst of a gracious work of God. While he was on his knees asking God to show him His way, and if there was anything hindering his being used by Him, that He would show it to him, suddenly the thought came, "*What about baptism?* If you saw it, would you be willing to obey?" At the time the same subject was exercising his correspondent, and the answer he returned was, "*If that came from God, it will come back to you.*" And, sure enough, it did. And in this way: A number of months after—it may be a year—he went to another town to try a series of meetings, if he could get an entrance. He rented a schoolhouse for his meetings. He searched the town for lodgings, but could find no one to take him in: all were afraid of him. At last he called on an old lady who turned out to be a true child of God, and a Baptist—the only one in the town. Everything in her home spoke only of poverty. She lived alone. He told her his errand to the town, and that now his only obstacle was, he could get no lodgings. She at once offered to do the very best she could for him, if he would put up with her poor accommodation. The situation was not just what the flesh would desire, but he gladly accepted her offer.

At the first meeting there was a crowd of young men and women full of the Devil. On the way to his lodgings they did everything but use violence to him. When he reached the shelter of the old lady's cottage, they were talking about the ungodliness of the young people (probably all of them were *church members*), when the old lady remarked, as she dropped down on her knees to poke the fire in the grate, "No wonder that they should behave so. Are they not made to believe that they were made Christians when they were christened, and that they are all right?" It was a bow drawn at a venture, though in her simplicity she did not know she was drawing a bow at all. But she did; and the arrow went home, through the joints of the harness of old tradition and prejudice, and did its work with him. It was the Word of God come back to him again, and then and there he saw the sham of the baby-sprinkling tradition; and, if I mistake not, he decided that very night to obey the Lord and be baptised. Not many days after he was immersed in the river Dee by brother John Davidson, of New Deer, about five o'clock on a Saturday morning, in the presence of his eldest daughter, who herself had been baptised not long before, and his two sons, then boys. Thus the Good Shepherd was leading on, and His servant promptly following, step by step, as the path was made plain. Indeed, the great truths of death and resurrection, symbolised by baptism and underlying the figure, became the key to unlock the hidden treasures of the Book that had always been so precious to

him. He now began to see from the Word God's one and only way of gathering His people to remember the Lord Jesus in the breaking of bread, and as an holy priesthood to worship Him by the Spirit and in truth, according to Matt. xviii. 20, and many other Scriptures.

During this period of deep soul-exercise on his own part, and that of a number of others so closely associated with him in service, the Gospel was being preached in many places. "The Northern Evangelists," as they were called, travelled south as far as the northern counties of England, and as far north as John-o'-Groat's in Scotland, and to the Orkney Isles. The hand of the Lord was with them, and souls were saved everywhere. In Aberdeen itself, almost as soon as Mr. Ross resigned his connection with the mission, he rented the old Gallowgate Chapel for evangelistic work. In it there were meetings held nightly for probably two years; and many were there led to Christ.

Then, in many places in the north of England—Newcastle-on-Tyne, Gateshead, Jarrow, and Consett—there were companies of young converts not yet formally withdrawn from their old ecclesiastical associations, but, like the men who gathered to David in the cave of Adullam, "discontented, in distress, and in debt." They were like stones quarried, but not gathered unto Him, and thus built up. The same thing prevailed in many places in the northern counties of Scotland. In Inverurie, Huntly, Insch, Oyne, Old Rain, Old Meldrum, and Kemnay, in

Aberdeenshire; Keith, Dufftown, Craigellachie, and Aberlour, in Banffshire; Rothes, Elgin, Forres, in Morayshire, and many other inland places, there were groups of young believers desiring to follow the Lord as the light came. In two or three places in Aberdeenshire, even previous to 1871 and 1872, God had led a few of His own gathering to the name of the Lord. The city of Aberdeen had been the scene of wonderful blessing, ever since the great work of Reginald Radcliffe in 1859 and 1860. It had been visited by many of the men whom God had been using in those days—some sowing and planting, and some watering. Among others who came was W. P. Mackay, author of the well-known book, "Grace and Truth." Before that precious book was published, he delivered the twelve addresses it contains when they were fresh in his own soul, and they were greatly used in establishing many in the grace of God and in His truth.

When Rice T. Hopkins and Samuel Blow visited Aberdeen, souls were saved. They were used in leading a little company still farther on, even to gather alone in that Name which is above every name. They met in what was known as The Old Dispensary, upstairs, in a furniture warehouse on or near Castle Street. At New Deer also there was a little company gathered in scriptural simplicity, through the labours of Dr. Davis, a coloured brother. In Peterhead, where the Lord had saved and used our beloved brother, Wm M'Lean, now labouring in New Zealand, there was also a gathering to His name.

When the Lord opened the eyes of Mr. Ross to see that same Jesus, whom he had so long known and preached as the Saviour of the lost, as also both Lord and Christ, the Centre of gathering, and Lord in the midst, he found that these three little companies, close at hand, were there before him. What else could he do, but take his place with them? Then the little meeting in Aberdeen was transferred from the Old Dispensary to the Gallowgate Chapel, and after it became too strait for them, they moved to St. Paul Street Hall, where an assembly of believers still gather in the name of the Lord Jesus, from which several companies have hived off to gather in other parts of the city and suburbs. At the same time others of "The Northern Evangelists" were being led on in "the ways that be in Christ," and as they themselves saw the light, they followed it, and went back over the old ground, teaching the young believers what God had taught themselves. Thus and then sprang up most of the assemblies still to be found in the north of Scotland and also in the places mentioned in the north of England and elsewhere.

No doubt, those were days of small things, when looked at in the light of the Church in the glory of her unity, love, and power, at the beginning of her history in the Acts of the Apostles. But as to the little remnant that came out of Babylon in Ezra's days, the blessing was the same in kind as in the palmy days of Solomon, so to this feeble few at least a taste of the Pentecostal love, joy, and peace was given, while

all were content to sit at Jesus' feet, exalting Him alone, the language of each heart being, "*Christ all and in all.*" The remembrance of these days is still savoury and precious.

Doubtless there has been progress since then in the knowledge of the truth, but has there been corresponding growth of faith in Christ Jesus, and love to His saints? true, real, single-hearted loyalty to Him as Lord, with meekness, humbleness of mind and long-suffering toward one another?

Although the North-East Coast Mission had no station in the Orkney Islands during Mr. Ross's superintendency, one of their missionaries visited the islands, along with our brother R. T. Hopkins, in about the beginning of 1867. God gave much blessing with His Word. Many souls were saved; and in the summer or fall Mr. Hopkins returned and taught the young converts the truth of baptism and gathering in the Name of the Lord. The assemblies in Stromness, Harray, and Westray were then begun; and they were the first gathering in Scriptural simplicity that we know of north of Glasgow.

By-and-by the need in regions beyond began to be considered, and thus the field widened and extended, some of the labourers going to Canada and the United States, some to Ireland, and later on to other countries.

The writer crossed the Atlantic in 1871; others followed in 1872. Then practically began the work that has grown steadily since, and extended from the

Atlantic to the Pacific, over the great continent of America. Mr. Ross, after two or three years' pioneering and commencing to build upon a clean foundation in and around Edinburgh, crossed the Atlantic along with the writer, who had been back on a visit in the fall of 1876. We had often spoken together about the need of the great American continent. One evening, while we were in the house, he came in with the joyful announcement, "I've got my marching orders—I am going to America." He told us afterwards, while in deep soul-exercise about his path, and while he was waiting upon God, crossing the Meadows in Edinburgh, the word came to him in fresh power, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." He had no doubt it was the voice of God to him in regard to his prayer about America. In two or three weeks his way was perfectly and comfortably cleared up to go—of course, leaving his family for the present in Scotland.

As the result of many years of constant labour and the weight of heavy responsibilities, he was at the time quite broken down in health. But, under God's blessing, with the sea voyage and the change, in a few weeks his old vigour and elasticity returned.

He began his labours on this side in the city of Boston. There were already a few young converts, happy in their first love, and a few older saints restored from the rubbish of denominations, found in a small assembly gathered less than a year before. A well-attended Bible reading every afternoon, a Gospel

meeting in the evening, and often a forenoon parlour meeting besides, formed his daily programme. He was right in his element, and saints were having a little foretaste of Heaven. The first conference or special meetings for Christians, gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus, was held that winter in the city of Hamilton, Ontario, four days at the New Year. He was there. A large proportion of those present were young converts or revived saints. Worldliness and covetousness had not yet begun to blight their joy and testimony. The meetings were such as shall never be forgotten. A large share of the ministry fell to him, and such was its character—clear, clean-cut, and straight—in the power of God, that it helped to give character and tone to the young Christians who were there, as well as to the assemblies they represented. After visiting several assemblies in Ontario, he returned to Boston and spent the remaining part of the Winter and Spring. His hands were full, to his heart's content. It was the time of D. L. Moody's first great Gospel campaign in that city. Although he never attended any of Moody's meetings, his own Bible readings and Gospel meetings became known to some of the workers in connection with Mr. Moody's meetings. They brought anxious souls to Mr. Ross, until his own room became a regular enquiry room. People from the country and other States were among them. The coming day alone will declare how many souls passed from darkness into light in that room. There are still in the Boston assembly living witnesses

to the grace and power of God through those private dealings with souls, as well as through the Bible readings and Gospel meetings he held then. In May he recrossed the Atlantic. But, as he has often told us, *he took America with him on his back*, and it remained there until it became too heavy to carry. And so in the following Spring, 1878, he returned to Canada, and toiled on through the intense heat of the summer, confirming the souls of believers, and preaching the Gospel where there were open doors. He took a run down to New England also, visited Boston, Byefield, and other places, then returned West. In the fall he visited a few saints who had recently been gathered to the name of the Lord in Valparaiso, Indiana, fifty miles east of Chicago. He got an opening for the Gospel in Crown Point, a town in the same State and nearer Chicago. God was with him there in power. At this time he was there only a few weeks. However, a few were saved, and others awakened. They were sorry to have him leave so soon. His reply to them was, "The good seed won't rot." He returned to Hamilton, Canada, for the conference, but Chicago, the metropolis of the West, with its great need, was pressing sorely upon him. And for months it was his constant prayer that God would open a door for the Gospel in that mighty city. He fully believed it was to be done. In the Spring he went West again to Valparaiso, and took his new tent to Crown Point, and many who had been awakened the fall before were then led to Christ, and gathered unto His name. That little testimony still lives.

Then came the time for Chicago. He did not know a single soul in that great, busy, godless city.

In company with a brother from Valparaiso, he went over to Chicago, to spy out the land. He was introduced to a prominent Christian worker, a business man. They were in the back part of the store, while business was in full swing. The gentleman asked Mr. Ross if he believed in the eternal punishment of the wicked. With all the emphasis of a deep heart conviction, and with a clear, sonorous voice that could easily be heard at the other end of the store, he replied, "I believe the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God." The gentleman then said, "I think I can give you the address of a gentleman who will be interested in your project." Thus ended his fellowship with this so-called "Christian Worker," so far as the Gospel campaign in Chicago was concerned. However, Mr. Ross's faith was not in men of influence, but in the "living and the eternal God." He was deeply interested in the Gospel of this Son being taken to Chicago, and God had His eyes on His servant, to guide him by the right way. And in due time a site for the Gospel tent was secured close by Union Park, in the heart of a residential portion of the city. In a short time he was there with his tent, accompanied by brother James Goodfellow, the son of a Canadian farmer, and only saved two or three years before, as his helper. He was frequently after this his helper in California and elsewhere. With the help of one

or two idle men standing around, whom he hired, they put up the tent under a broiling Chicago sun. As they were busy at it, he remarked in his own quaint way to brother Goodfellow, "This tent will make more noise in Chicago than all the sawmills in Michigan." And no doubt it did make some noise, but it did more. It was there for God and His Word. He often said, "The Word of God was like the flail. If there was room in the barn to let it go in, it would make room for itself," and so it proved true then, as it often had done before and since. For through that small tent, capable of seating about 200, the Word got into Chicago, and not only made room for itself there, but sounded out from thence to the country around, reaching far and wide. The tent was pitched on Saturday. Notices of the meetings were circulated, to begin on Lord's Day afternoon and evening. Mr. Ross either called on the gentleman whose address he had got from the Christian worker, or else corresponded with him, and found that at one time he had been in fellowship with Christians gathered to the name of the Lord. He told him of his object and of the meetings, and, moreover, that the Lord's Table would be spread in the tent at 10.30 on Lord's Day morning. At the hour he drove with his wife in his carriage to the tent, and the four remembered the Lord in the breaking of bread. When the meeting was over, the gentleman remarked, "Well, this *is* surely outside the camp." And indeed it was—too far outside evidently for him, for that was the first and last of his fellowship with them.

As the hour drew near for the afternoon meeting—his first Gospel meeting in Chicago—the tent was opened, and, to let the air pass through, it was opened both front and back. No sooner was it opened, than the people began to come in at the door, and walked through, taking in the whole situation. They looked at two lonely preachers, with their Bibles, hymn-sheets, and tracts, and passed out at the back. Thus, for a considerable time they had a procession of curiosity-seekers passing through. It was after time for the meeting to begin before a living soul became interested enough to sit down and see what it was to be. By-and-by a few did come who sat down, and they had their first meeting. There was not much in it to puff them up, or to encourage them to go on But Mr. Ross had learned to encourage himself in the Living God, rather than circumstances and appearances; and thus he went on in the face of all difficulties. He used to say, "What are difficulties to God?" The meetings went on—Bible reading in the afternoons, and Gospel meeting in the evening. Some Christians were attracted, and became interested in the precious truth of God. Sinners were awakened and led to Christ. The meetings, though never very large, were soft and good. Christians and converts were taught and grounded in the foundation truths of the salvation of God, and their responsibility and privilege of implicit obedience to the Word in all things. The trumpet with him gave no uncertain sound, conveying the impression that one thing was almost as good as another.

No; with him the Word of God was right in all things, and everything else was wrong, no matter how popular it might be. A favourite text with him was Luke xvi. 15, "For that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." He taught the converts the truth of baptism, gathering in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as God's only way for all His people, and also what their conduct should be when thus gathered. At the end of the tent season there was a small assembly gathered to the Name which is above every name. A hall was rented for their meetings, as well as a door opened for the whole Word of God in Chicago that has never been closed, thus proving again the truth of one of Mr. Ross's favourite sayings, "Only let the Word of God *in*, and it will make room for itself." It was this confidence in God and His Word that nerved and urged him on in the blessed service of trying "*to get it in*." And, whilst we knew his large heart for the sheep and lambs of the flock of Christ, and that he took delight in visiting the little assemblies far and near over the broad continent, seeking to help and encourage them in the ways that be in Christ Jesus, and wherever possible never failed to attend the special meetings for Christians that of late years have become so numerous, yet that which was always nearest his heart, and seemed to increase with his age till it was almost a passion with him, was what he himself often called "breaking up new prairie"; or, as Paul puts it, "Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was

named" (Rom. xv., 20); and in this respect he might well put many younger preachers to shame who, though in the prime of life and strength, spend their time in going from one assembly to another, where they have homes and halls, friends and favours, with other men's foundations and line of things made ready to their hands, instead of being ambitious to go in for a higher line of service—enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Few, like our beloved brother, seem to go in for "breaking up new prairie," and having the unspeakable joy of reaping the fruit of their own planting Yes; Mr. Ross ardently coveted this, and went in for it; and the Lord granted him his desire. When he was long past seventy years of age, he wrote from the Far West city of Omaha, Neb., saying he was there with his Gospel tent, all alone. It was likely to be his last summer in tent work, and he was anxious to make the most of it. After telling about one or two Christians whom we know, he said, "I have a room and board at Mrs. ——'s house, but when not visiting the people, and peddling the Gospel, I spend my time in the tent with God, and no one to trouble me but the devil, the fleas, and myself. Oh, the possibilities of prayer!" In a letter written by him, which we have seen, dated February 2nd, 1903, just four days before the Lord called him up higher, and when, judging from his writing, his hand was becoming already paralysed, never did his spirit seem more fresh, rejoicing over a few babes the Lord so graciously gave him during the

very last days of his wonderful life, and yet longing for more.

Were we able to trace his journeyings, which were often, and his labours, which were abundant, during the twenty-four years from the day he pitched his Gospel tent in Chicago, to the day of his home-call, it would fill a very large volume indeed. Over this vast Continent, from the Atlantic in the east to the Pacific in the west, stretching three thousand miles across, and from the plains of Manitoba in the North-West to Georgia in the South, probably two thousand miles or more, he pioneered and preached Christ. All has been chronicled above by the faithful hand of the Lord and Master, till that day when all shall be manifested and rewarded to the glory of that grace which was so abundant toward him, and to the everlasting joy of His servant.

Meanwhile, and till then, he has entered upon, and is enjoying, the "very far better." May his mantle fall upon many Elishas! This is the great and crying need of a sleeping Church and a poor, doomed world (Psalm xii., 1).

2.—By John Smith, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.

My first meeting with our departed brother, Mr. Ross, was on the Castlegate of Aberdeen in the autumn of 1869. Mr. Munro and he were having an open-air meeting there. When Mr. Ross got up on the chair, he said, "I always like to have a bone to pick. The bone we will pick this evening is in

John x. 9—"I am the Door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." Just as he repeated those words, an infidel in the crowd cried out, "Who is Christ?" "God's Son, man," came the ready reply, with power in it. "Who is God?" cried the infidel again. "Let us pray for this poor man," said Mr. Ross; and then he lifted up his heart and voice to God in a way I had not been accustomed to. A few lately saved fishermen from Footdee who were present also prayed, and when the praying was done, the infidel had fled.

I had been warned against Donald Ross as a man whose preaching was calculated to break up churches. He would pray (so we were told) about "sawdust deacons," etc. However, that meeting made us feel as if our heart was knit to him; and God alone knows the help and blessing his company and ministry have been to me. A few months after this, our brother, James W. Smith, now with the Lord, and I were going to Banchory for an open-air meeting. When getting near the railway station in Aberdeen, we met Mr. Ross coming from it. He lifted up his staff to beckon us to him. "Where are you going, boys?" was the question. When we told him, I think I hear his benediction yet: "God Almighty go with you! Banchory needs it much." He seemed so pleased, we both thought maybe he was afraid we were just going away for an afternoon's outing. His blessing abode with us. Afterwards, when applying to him to be received into the Northern Evangelistic

Association, he asked, "Are your teeth growing?" This was a frequent question of his. Then he asked, "Could you live on peasemeal brose and eighteenpence a week?" We told him we thought we would like to go for Jesus. Then he spoke so kindly, and exhorted us to live for God, and ask every man, woman, and child if they were "born again."

His preaching, whether to saint or sinner, was most searching; and while he had some quaint and most original incidents, they were always followed by such solemn appeals, one could not smile much at them. He regarded preaching not in the power of the Holy Ghost as "neither good for man nor beast"—to use his own words; and often we have heard him say respecting such preaching, "It wouldn't kill a mosquito." But however illiterate the preacher was, if he believed he was honest and clean, he would encourage him to go on. He used to speak about "feeling a preacher's pulse" by his prayers. How many of the Lord's dear people who were privileged to be at the first Hamilton Conference in Ontario have been speaking of the first word they ever heard from him! He stood up and asked, "Children, have ye any meat?" Then followed one of those unique addresses that only Donald Ross could give. Some of them will live in our souls. When he would give a short word about the love and faithfulness of the living and eternal God, the words would burn their way into one, strengthening their hands in God. One address at a Toronto Conference, when he read Matt. xxvii., and dwelt on the sufferings

of Christ, his own eyes suffused with tears, led to real worship, and God got tears from many that day. He loved to hear the preaching that "shaved close." He often spoke of it himself as "scraping." A quotation from a letter we received, written by him while on a visit to the Pacific coast, may here be in place:—"I am longing to meet some of God's dear preachers, and get a thrashing from them within an inch of my life. Oh, how much I need it! But my hearing is nearly all gone, yet God can cause me to hear the sweet and savoury Gospel of the grace of God in the Holy Ghost." If Mr. Ross expressed a feeling of need of "thrashing within an inch of his life," what about the most of us who are all the time looking for comforting words from every preacher? The preaching that suits many is that which never leads to self-judgment, nor to turn away from one's self in loathing to rest in the unfailing grace of God.

Some of us who had been so long accustomed to Mr. Ross's ministry had almost concluded he was to be always with us, going out and in among us; but he has gone to the One who has the best claim on him, and the One whom he loved and served with purpose of heart. The brethren here in Cleveland have savoury recollections of his visits among us.

3.—By John Gill, Boston, U.S.A.

When I first met Mr. Ross, I had been about five years converted. It was in the town of Nairn, where a work of grace began, chiefly among the

fishing folk; and Duncan Matheson came to have some meetings. At his closing meeting he said, "I am leaving you, but there is a man coming that I can heartily commend as sound in the faith. Yes; as sound as a bell. In fact, I call him 'The walking Shorter Catechism.' I have given you the stories; he will give you the doctrine. His name is Donald Ross, superintendent of the North-East Coast Mission." Mr. Ross came, and began to preach. I think the first time I heard him was in the United Presbyterian meeting-place, on the subject of "Election." I had never before heard anyone put things so plain and in such a matter-of-fact way, and ever after I coveted his manner and his matter. At that time quite a number were saved, and of course joined the various Churches, as in those days all were advised to do. About a year after—perhaps 1866—through the energy of Duncan Matheson and a Miss Fraser from Inverness, a mission for soldiers and militiamen was originated in Fort-George, and given in charge to Mr. Ross. Soon after they offered this station to me. This brought me into closer contact with him, by letter and occasional visits, for a period of about seven years. I can remember little now of what he said all these years, but some of the things he did I remember well. Often, when a few believers would be together, if the conversation was not profitable, he would suddenly say, "Boys, let us pray." Then I had the privilege on some occasions of sharing his bedroom. I have often waked up during the night to find myself alone, while he was on his

knees in prayer for the meetings and preachers. I can remember how small I felt, and quite ashamed that I had so little compassion for souls. At another time we were having a series of meetings in Rosemarkie, across the channel from Fort-George, where the Lord wrought mightily. I have seen many in tears during the singing of the first hymn, and some unable to sing for weeping, the power of God being so manifestly present. Souls were saved, and sometimes one or more in the audience would cry out in distress of soul; yet it made little or no confusion.

In my native village of Findhorn, where quite a number were saved through the preaching of Mr. Ross, Mr. Munro, and others, at a cottage meeting just opposite my mother's house, the kitchen was quite full. Mr. Ross was standing with his back to the fire, and speaking from these words in Rom. iii. 22: "The righteousness of God is unto all and upon all them that believe," and pressing them home on each individual, which was a remarkable feature of his preaching. He addressed each personally until he came round to an old lady who sat on the end of the bed. "What do you say to it, Granny?" "Ochone! I wish I were worthy o' it!" was the answer. "It is unto *all* and UPON all them that believe." I remember the blessed, holy, solemn stillness when he came to the left of the fireplace. He said, "Mrs. Matheson, what do you say to it. It is unto *all*. . ." "Oh," she says, "I see it noo! I see it noo. I never blinned an e'e last night an' a' last week. I wanted Johnnie Gill to

be the means of saving me; but God is Sovereign, and He has used you. Praise His Name, I see it noo! And oh, I *am* happy."

At Conon Bridge, Ross-shire, he preached in Gaelic in the open air one evening, and although I did not know a word, but guessed some of them, I knew he was speaking in the power of God by his utterance and movements, and by the moans and tears of several who were at that meeting. They told me afterwards—some of the older ones—that they had heard nothing like it since the days of Dr. M'Donald of Ferintosh, known as "The Apostle of the North."

Only about two years ago, on this side of the Atlantic, the Lord gave me my heart's desire to see Mr. Ross, Mr. Munro, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Carnie, all at the New Bedford Annual Conference. We had a blessed time, and I had the conviction it was to be our last meeting until we meet around the throne. Mr. Ross came up to Boston, and held a few meetings. His preaching was fresh and grippy as ever. When speaking of these old times in Scotland he said, "Times have changed since then, and even with some preachers that you and I know, they have fallen in with the soft thing that, alas! is now going up there—wishie-washie stuff, that is neither good for man nor beast. At a meeting in one of your old parishes I gave them some of the old-fashioned thing, and a few of the preachers came to me after, and told me that it would never do now. Well, at the afternoon meeting I got on my feet again, and, instead of apologising or

using oil to soften the wounds that had been made, I used a little more salt, and rubbed it in well. At the close the preachers came and confessed that they were all wrong. In general, Scotland has changed for the worse. Between 'Higher Critics,' and ungodly Professors in colleges, and unconverted ministers, and the increase in whisky-drinking, things are in a bad state up there."

Since Mr. Ross came to America, I have seen less of him. His home has been in Chicago, and he has been mostly in Canada and the Western and Southern States, where God has mightily used him to do a great work. Now the aged warrior and earnest worker is at home with Christ, and I count it one of God's greatest mercies to me that I was ever permitted to meet with beloved Donald Ross.

Footdee Recollections.

By G. R. Masson, A. and D. Fowler, and Others.

AT the mouth of the river Dee, and within the boundaries of the city of Aberdeen, lies the erstwhile fishing-village of Footdee (the *Fotin* of the sixteenth century, the *Foty* of the seventeenth, or the *Futtie* of the eighteenth). Fifty years ago this village consisted of two large squares of small, red-tiled, white-washed houses, contained some four score families, and possessed about twenty fishing-boats. Eight houses formed a side to each of the squares, which were named North (or Fittie) Square, and South (or Torry) Square. The village hall, used as a day-school, had a length of two houses—namely, fifty feet—and could barely be outwardly distinguished from the surrounding houses. The villagers were wild, impulsive, and superstitious, and, in relation to God and His Gospel, lived in heathen darkness. Their ignorance at that time may be illustrated by a story, a century old, told concerning a Footdee couple.

Husband and wife attended the parish kirk one Sunday morning for the first time in their lives. The sermon preached that day, on "The death and suffer-

ings of our Saviour," somewhat affected the guidwife, and on reaching home she asked her husband "if he kent wha wis the ill-used man the Doctor wis telling them aboot the day?" "I dinna ken; I never 'ard o' him; I ken naething at a' aboot him," was the retort. Next day, "Meg," when around with her fish, appeared before the minister at his house, wanting to "ken aboot the ill-used man." After expressing his sorrow that she was so ignorant of Scripture teaching, he went over the chief points in Christ's life, putting stress on His sufferings and death. In her excitement she asked the question, "And faur (where) did it 'appen, and foo lang ago is't, Doctor, since that man was so ill-used?" "Very nearly eighteen hundred years ago, and thousands of miles away, Margaret." Holding up her hands, she exclaimed, "Auchteen hunner year ago, Doctor! Auchteen hunner year! It's sae lang ago, and sae far awa', we'll jist hope it's a lee!"

But God, in His sovereign and everlasting grace, was to dispel this darkness, and to direct the beams of the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ into the heart of almost every villager. To accomplish this end, He impressed on Donald Ross a deep sense of the spiritual needs of Footdee.

THE NORTH-EAST COAST MISSION.

In July, 1858, Thomas Rosie founded in Aberdeen the North-East Coast Mission, whose object was to promote the spiritual welfare of sailors and fishermen

on the north-east coast of Scotland. Mr. Rosie, cradled and rocked in one of "the storm-swept Orcades," had fittingly devoted his sanctified energies to the conversion to God of the sons of the deep. In 1850 he had been appointed the first missionary of the Union Coast Mission, whose field extends from North Berwick to Berwick-on-Tweed. Duncan Matheson, of Crimea fame, was also a candidate. In 1852, Mr. Rosie founded in Edinburgh the Scottish Coast Mission, and in 1855 he instituted in Glasgow the West Coast Mission. In a pamphlet announcing the foundation of the North-East Coast Mission, he referred to the great American Revival of 1857, saying, "With what interest and delight does every Christian among us view the remarkable and gracious moving of the Spirit of God among our brethren across the sea, and earnestly desire that the Lord would visit our land, and refresh us with the light of His countenance!" Donald Ross was appointed in the end of July, 1858, the first secretary and superintendent of this Mission, whose sphere was to extend along two hundred miles of a coast containing 57 towns and villages. Blessing from on high attended the labours of its godly and faithful missionaries, and Mr. Ross's first annual report contained such sentences as "At Bervie, Gourdon, Downies, Cove, St. Combs, Inverallochy, Cairnbulg, and Broadsea the blessing has descended; waters have broken out in the wilderness and streams in the desert. At the present time there are hundreds crying, 'What must we do to be saved?'

Seven hundred copies of the Scriptures have been disposed of during this year."

The Mission's founder, Mr. Rosie, had in 1859 been appointed missionary to the Bombay Harbour Mission. The report containing the above-quoted words reached him in India a few days before his death, and was read by him with mingled joy and awe. Donald Ross continued at the head of the Mission for twelve years, during which time he witnessed, and was the chief instrument in, three noteworthy works of grace in Footdee—those of 1861, 1862, and 1869.

THE REVIVAL OF 1861.

On a Sunday afternoon in 1859 the free and artless way of salvation was preached in the open air within the squares of the village for almost the first time in its history. The preacher, Donald Ross, made then a house-to-house visitation of the people, and found only one Christian—John Main, a young ship captain, who had come home to die. Main, who had, some years previously, been translated from darkness to light in Sunderland, had prayed long and earnestly for the entrance of the Gospel into his native village. He passed away a month before the first awakening in Footdee in 1861. Donald Ross continued to preach at regular intervals, at least once a fortnight, throughout the whole of the year 1860 to audiences of three or four—generally children—without seeing any fruit of his labours. Indeed, the fisher-folks despitefully used him, and he

would often cry out, while preaching in the open air, with a sympathy born from above, "Cold Footdee! Cold Footdee!" During this time he prayed regularly for a storm, to the intent that the fishermen would be kept at home. Towards the end of January, 1861, the storm did come. The schooner "Mary," of Fraserburgh, lay windbound in Aberdeen harbour. Her captain, Wilson Summers, was an earnest Christian of but ten months' standing, and, having previously become acquainted with Donald Ross at Fraserburgh, was delighted to help his friend in the work of proclaiming the Gospel in Footdee. The singing by Mr. Summers and one of his sailors of Wesley's hymn, "Behold the Saviour of mankind," with chorus, "O, the Lamb, the bleeding Lamb, the Lamb upon Calvary," attracted about twenty fisher-girls into the village hall. The intimation was given out that a meeting would be held on the morrow if the "Mary" still lay windbound; and she did continue, providentially, to lie in harbour for ten days. On the second night the audience was doubled. Between two and three hundred villagers gathered on the third day to hear the singing and the preaching, which were at once simple and powerful. The windows of heaven soon opened in blessing; the village was inundated; and the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters. Probably about a tenth part of the dwellers in the village during the months of February and March were delivered from out of the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the Son of

God's love. Mr. Ross watched over and nourished these his children in the faith with a jealous care, and, out of men and women who could barely read or write, there arose men—such as Andrew Allan, Geo. R. Masson, Andrew Baxter, and Alexander Caie—who became earnest preachers of the Gospel of God's grace, and women who sang the "songs of Zion" with rare feeling. Mr. Ross filled their hands with work. The men "opened the meeting" nightly in regular rotation. The women travelled much with him to such southern fishing villages as Burnbanks, Cove, Findon, and Portlethen. At Cove and Findon there was real spiritual blessing, similar in intensity to that experienced in Footdee. The "songs of Zion" were often sung to the "world's tunes," and Mr. Ross would occasionally remark to his noble army of travelling songstresses, "Girls, it's a pity we cannot take all the devil's music from him." It may be here said that Mr. Ross journeyed in those days from one coast town to another on a small pony.

THE SECOND REVIVAL IN 1862.

The meetings commenced in Footdee continued nightly without intermission for two whole years, during which time Mr. Ross was helped by such godly and earnest men as John Chrystal, James Dewar, and Robert Annand, and by several of the city ministers. Aberdeen had, in 1858, passed through a deep spiritual revival, and there were a number of earnest preachers

there. Few, however, were converted during the latter half of 1861. But, early in 1862, there was another remarkable and gracious and far more reaching moving of the Spirit of God among the fisher people. More excitement prevailed than in the previous year's work, and there was probably a greater proportion of "stubble." Concerning such chaff, Mr. Ross sometimes said he could not believe a work of grace to be really of God unless there was chaff. He saw that in his Bible—there must be the wheat and the tares.

The news of such mighty spiritual work, stamped with signature divine, travelled over the north of Scotland, and was, doubtless, an incentive to those who laboured for souls to faint not. Somewhere about the year 1865 a meeting was called at Drumblade, near Insch, by the "ministers" of the district to hear further from Donald Ross and a representative Footdee fisherman as to what God had wrought. At this gathering Mr. Ross declared that some ministers reminded him of what he had seen in some of the fisher houses—a beautifully coloured earthen bowl on a shelf with the broken part turned from sight. Some ministers who had once been useful had now become in their parishes as merely ornamental broken vessels.

During the seven years intervening between 1862 and 1869 there had been in Footdee but scant and occasional droppings from above. Mr. Ross had preached the Gospel from the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and had reached the last chapter. One of the Footdonians has a vivid recollection of walking out of

the "Auld School" with him, when the latter said, with tears rolling down his cheeks, "Andrew, I've gone through the 'Acts,' and have not seen one soul saved." But why so much wonder, Donald Ross, when you were so deliberately bitter against a commandment of the Lord so prominent in the Acts—baptism?

THE INGATHERING OF 1869.

But the calm was a calm before a storm. During the months of March and April in the year 1869 there fell from a heaven of blessing a locally unprecedented, or since unequalled, deluge. In the month of February two deaths in the village had seemingly touched the consciences of many. One afternoon, at the Sunday school, to the astonishment of the teachers, all the children broke down, crying for salvation. The "zymotic disease" of soul-trouble soon swept over the village. Mr. Ross, who was labouring at some of the Kincardineshire villages at the time, came quickly on the scene. The fishermen, because of deep inward conviction, were unable to go to sea; their fleet of yawls was beached, and lay uncared for during five or six weeks. Men, women, and children were seen at all times of the day dropping on their knees—indeed, oft-times lying full-length—on the snow-covered ground, crying for mercy. Donald Ross and Andrew Allan preached with unction to a nightly overcrowded "school," while to those unable to gain admittance (for the Aberdeen townspeople flocked to the village) the

Gospel was proclaimed in several of the fishermen's houses. At least three meetings were conducted simultaneously each night during the months of March and April, 1869. Mr. Ross has estimated that about *six hundred* souls passed out of darkness into light during those six weeks.

HOW THE MEETINGS WERE CONDUCTED.

How were those meetings conducted? During March and April there was a daily and largely attended prayer meeting at three o'clock. Between six and seven o'clock a simple Gospel was told out to the children, amongst whom the revival had begun; and after seven o'clock the maturer in years heard the Word. The meeting being declared "over," those deeply anxious remained, while the Christian women went out and assembled in an adjoining house for prayer; and likewise the men apart, those only being retained in the hall in whose ability to lead anxious ones to Christ Mr. Ross had the fullest confidence. The hall door was then shut, and entrance was allowed to only those whose spirituality and ability was undoubted.

A conversation such as the following took place nightly between the doorkeeper and Mr. Ross:— "Someone is knocking, Mr. Ross." "Who is he?" "Mr. Williamson, minister of the Free High Church." "Let him in; he loves the Gospel." While sin-burdened souls were being led to the Sin-bearer no sing-

ing was indulged in, though at the breaking-up of each "anxious meeting" the "songs of Zion" were heartily sung. Prayer during this after-meeting was offered only by those who were impressed with particular cases.

HELPING ON YOUNG CONVERTS.

How were the young converts helped on? Mr. Ross conducted a Bible-class for a year afterwards. This class was continued some years further by the successors of Mr. Ross in the Coast Mission. Nor were the converts left idle. Some forty young fishermen accepted responsibility for the weekly Gospel meeting—three for each meeting, the triplets being rotatory. The original "School" hall, being found too small, a large mission hall was erected in the centre of the North Square, and opened in November, 1869, mainly through the efforts of Mr. Ross.

PLATFORM REMARKS.

The platform remarks of Mr. Ross were always pithy, often personal. He once privately asked one of his Footdee converts to go through the streets of Aberdeen on a "fair" day carrying, like a sandwich-man, two boards with such words as "Prepare to meet thy God." The request was refused. Some time afterwards, the same fisherman asked Mr. Ross to give an address on the text, "Let us go forth, therefore, unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." On the

following night Mr. Ross declared while preaching, "Some of you asked me to preach on Heb. xiii., 13. God help you! Ye wouldna pit yer taes whaur yer heel was for the Lord, and ye say, 'Let us go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.'" At another time, G. R. Masson and a sceptical baker sat together near the door. At the close of his address, Mr. Ross, in commanding tones, said, "Masson, you pray; and pray for the baker."

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE VISITATION.

Apposite were his personal remarks. The question, "Are the hooks getting into your soul?" would be hurled at a woman baiting her lines; or "Are the herring choking your pipe?" would be asked of the fishermen during the herring-fishing season. We have said the children were affected. In one of the fisher houses one day he was met by a lisping infant, looking in his face, saying, "Man, are 'ou 'verted?" Planting his hand on the shoulder of the young questioner, Mr. Ross said, "Yes, my little man; I am converted. You put your father to shame. He never asked me if I had a soul!" and, turning to the child's father, between whom and Mr. Ross there was a strong friendship, he said, "Andrew, your boy is the third person who has asked me if I am converted."

REMARKABLE CONVERSIONS.

Two cases of conversion may here be recorded;—

One night in April, 1869, five or six young men met in "Sponkie's" to pray for the salvation of their friend. All kneeled but the determined old tar, who said to the young men, "Boys, dinna pray for Sponkie. He's made up his mind tae ging tae hell!" During the night he passed through much soul-trouble, and probably then found peace with God, and in the following night he passed into soul-liberty in the "Auld School." He was of a mechanical turn, and immediately proceeded to erect a large wooden revolving triangular pyramid, on the sides of which he painted, despite the fact he could barely distinguish the letters of the alphabet, these texts, "God is love," "Ye must be born again," "Escape for thy life!" "Prepare to meet thy God!" This structure turned every way, to show the way of life to all that passed by.

While going through the village one day, Mr. Ross was met by a woman named "Crannie," who asked, "What time is it, Mr. Ross?" "Exactly twelve o'clock." "I'm saved just this minute." He often told of this case—and it was a real one—in many parts of the world.

STRONG DRINK.

Mr. Ross at all times spoke strongly on the drink question. He once told of an old woman who declared she wished her throat a mile long to feel the whisky going down. At one time in Footdee there were three public-houses. In a few years all three were closed.

The news of the ancient warrior's decease was re-

ceived in Footdee with much regret and some tears. "He'll have many stars to his crown," was a common remark.

Aberdeen Reminiscences.

By George Shivas, Aberdeen.

OUR beloved brother has had his desire to "die in harness" fulfilled. He was a noble workman, and was used to do a great work for God in Aberdeen and the North, of which there is much fruit remaining till this day.

My first acquaintance of Mr. Ross was about forty years ago. He was then Superintendent of the North-East Coast Mission, through which a mighty work was done amongst the fishermen and their families all along the coast.

I first heard him preach in an old chapel in George Street, where he was conducting meetings, and from the very time I heard him speak I was struck with his straight and powerful preaching. He had a striking way of putting things which arrested attention and caused people to think, and a personality all his own. He was a man raised up and fitted by God for a special work, at a time when he was needed. His Gospel preaching was with great solemnity and power, and many, very many, were arrested and saved.

He was greatly used at Footdee, a fishing village at the mouth of the river Dee, close to Aberdeen, where for a long time he had meetings every night, sometimes oftener, and a mighty work was done. The power of the Spirit of God was marvellously felt at these meetings, and many who were saved then continue living witnesses for God to this day.

In 1870, Mr. Ross rented an old chapel in the Gallowgate, in the midst of a district famed for its ungodliness, and began to preach Jesus. The meetings were carried on by himself and others of the brethren connected with the Northern Evangelistic Society, and a great work was done. Up to this time nothing beyond preaching the Gospel and teaching believers in regard to their individual walk and life of personal godliness was heard there; but the Lord was leading on His servants in the truth, and soon it was seen to be His will that His people should meet in His name to break bread. A small company of Christians meeting in the Old Record Hall, Castle Street, simply in the Lord's name, outside of all denominations, came about the meetings in the Gallowgate, and it was found that they were meeting in the way that God had shown them from His Word. So the believers from Castle Street came to the old chapel in the Gallowgate, where the two companies became one, and were happily united in the Lord, and according to His Word. There was much blessing and real power with the Word in these early days, and no keeping back of the truth either. Besides Mr.

Ross, Brethren Donald Munro, John M. Campbell, Andrew Allan, George R. Masson, John Smith, and others frequently preached in the Gallowgate, and there were some stirring times there. Many were saved, numbers of God's people were led on in the truth, and added to the fellowship of the Assembly until the old chapel became too strait for them. Then the Gospel Hall, St. Paul Street, was rented, and there the Assembly continues to the present, while in Footdee, Holburn, Torry, and Woodside there are Assembles which have "hived off" from St. Paul Street. Mr. Ross had several times visited Aberdeen both before and since he crossed the Atlantic, and the saints were always glad to see and hear him. His ministry was always searching and practical, such as is needed to help believers to live godly.

He had very keen discernment of what was of God and what was of the flesh, and could very quickly detect what was not real.

One night a young man was preaching on the street. Mr. Ross came along, and, after listening for a few moments, moved along out of sight, still within hearing of the young preacher. A Christian who was evidently charmed by the young man's ability said to Mr. Ross, "That young man has a great gift, and will one day shine as a preacher." "Yes," said Mr. Ross, "I have just heard him, and he has vomited the most of a penny pamphlet." He was most considerate and gracious towards all young preachers who were seeking to serve the Lord according to the grace given

them, but he had no patience with those who tried to exhibit themselves.

He was a faithful servant of God, to whom we owe much, and who will have his full reward "in that day."

By John Martin, Canada.

It was in November, 1873, that I for the first time heard Mr. Ross preach the Gospel. Before that, I had heard much concerning him and those who laboured with him, from pulpits and otherwise, having such a colouring of defamation that one was almost afraid to come into contact with him. Amid all the opposing forces, the Spirit of God was working irresistibly on many hearts and consciences. I had read such books as "The Pilgrim's Progress" and "The World to Come: or Visions of Heaven and Hell," by John Bunyan. These, with what I was hearing daily about people being saved and rejoicing in the knowledge of it, made deep impressions on my soul. At this time Mr. Ross had a Book and Tract Room, which was situated first in Schoolhill and afterwards in George Street, in the city of Aberdeen. Daily I had to pass the place going to and from my work. The window was neatly furnished with books, tracts, and Scriptures, so presented as to attract the passers-by with words of entreaty and warning. At this particular time it had one curious and mysterious picture exposed to view—John Hambleton's Tile of Babylon, with the encircling trumpet overhead, giving

forth from its widened end the awful sound of Babylon's fall and judgment; enough to strike terror and dismay on the inhabitants of Aberdeen. On a summer evening, going home, the devil doubtless put it into my heart to enter the book-room and ask if they had the "Weekly Newspaper" or a copy of Shakespeare or Byron's works in stock. The reply was a simple "No," followed by such a look that it had the effect of deepening in my conscience a sense of my wickedness. An earnest believer named John Bendelow took me one night to hear Mr. Ross proclaiming God's message of salvation in the open air. It was on a chill November night, and its blasts had indeed made the forest bare and naked, and so had the Spirit of God effected the same work in my soul. I stood there a naked, perishing sinner, listening to His messenger. Mr. Ross was giving it forth in a manner peculiar to himself, from the 3rd chapter of John's Gospel. Seeking to impress his hearers with the need of the "new birth," he made such statements as the following—"A cow, a horse, a sheep, or a dog don't require any such change; they have answered the end of their creation. But man is a sinner, and unless he is *born again* he will be in hell for ever. When God is saving, He first of all awakens the sinner as to his sin, and then shows him Christ, and when he believes on Him he is eternally saved." He went on to speak of God's love and Christ's death from verses 14 to 18, and, while doing so, *faith* towards Christ came to my soul, and I went home that night

believing on Him, that He had atoned for my sins on the cross. I was justified and made free from that very hour.

As soon as I began to confess Christ and to be associated with Mr. Ross and other believers, persecution began. When I told my landlady that I was saved and attending the hall where Mr. Ross preached, and, further, that I was going to be baptised, I received intimation to leave the house. The Lord's presence was very manifest with His people in those days, and the little persecution they received only led them the more to cleave to "the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls."

The hatred the world bore to him and his fellow-labourers was manifest. The not infrequent appellative term, "holy," could often be heard from the lips of the ungodly, as attached to their name, such as Holy Peter, Holy John, Holy Davie, and Holy Annie, and so on. I remember being in company with a brother who was widely known as "Holy Willy," who laboured much in the Gospel. Returning from Bervie on a Monday morning, with another brother, the coach was crowded with passengers for Stonehaven. We had distributed tracts freely, which were received by all except one old lady, who, on the tract being presented to her, asked brother D— if he "belonged to Donald Ross." His reply was, "No; but I belong to the God of Donald Ross." "Well," said she, "I won't have your tracts; he speaks against kirks and ministers."

On the event of his leaving Aberdeen to reside in Edinburgh, an assembly tea and fellowship meeting was held in Aberdeen as a farewell. At the close of the interval for conversation, the meeting was resumed by Mr. Ross intimating that he was going first to speak to the young men and young women—the unmarried; next, to the elder or married, relative to their family responsibility and influence. In speaking to the young, he had not far proceeded in his address, when, amid a breathless silence, he raised his voice and shouted aloud, "Young men and young women, *beware of courting!* It will spoil you for God." After which he went on to speak of two very special blessings, as connected with our life in the world. The first and all-important was that of being saved; the second was our getting married, and that only "in the Lord." Such subjects seldom form the theme of public ministry, so that this unique parting word was all the more valued and remembered.

His boldness and energy in the spread of the Gospel might be likened to "the waves of the sea," which cannot be driven back by man. An example of this was given after a conference held in Philadelphia, U.S.A. On his return to the West, a number of brethren went to the station to see him aboard. The cars were crowded, and Mr. Ross, seizing the opportunity, rose from his seat and commenced to distribute tracts among the passengers. Very soon, however, he found himself under the arrest of the railroad newsagent, who asked him to cease giving out these publications,

as they hindered the sale of his books. Mr. Ross, equal to the occasion, looked at him, and quietly said, "Man, surely you would not hinder an auld man like me from giving out tracts. I come from where the heather grows." The agent said no more, but passed on; while Mr. Ross carried on unmolested his tract-distribution.

Revival Times and Work in Aberdeenshire.

By John Ritchie, Kilmarnock.

"KNOW ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen . . . in Israel," was the word that came to mind when the tidings reached us late in February, 1903, that the Lord's aged servant, Donald Ross, had been called "up higher," from Savannah, Georgia, United States of America, where up to within a week of his home-call he had been "in harness" at his life-work of preaching the Gospel and winning sinners to the Saviour. Thus his desire, so oft expressed, that he might "live and die speaking of the balmy name of Jesus" was fully granted.

It is not to exalt the man—for nothing was further from his desire than this when he was here with us—but to magnify the grace of God that was in him and wrought through him, that the following "Recollections" are here given. He was "a chosen vessel," raised up and fitted for a special and unique service in the world and the Church of God, at a remarkable time—one who was "unknown and yet well known," to whom personally we owe much in the Lord.

The first time that we saw and heard Mr. Ross was

on an April Sunday evening in 1871, in the Town Hall, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire. He was then in the prime of life, about fifty years of age, with a physique evidently well fitted to endure hard work, and a voice loud and strong, such as a Gospeller well inured to open-air work alone possesses. He spoke twice that night, at considerable length both times, with tremendous force and great solemnity, yet with such melting tenderness and in the power of the Holy Ghost, that few within the building were unmoved. Some whom we have known all through the intervening years were awakened and saved that night; others who came out of curiosity got as much as kept them from ever coming again, for so searching and exposing was his preaching, so irresistible were his appeals, and so solemn his warnings, that lifeless professors and ungodly sinners had either to be convicted of sin or flee from the truth. Such is the power of the unvarnished Word of God, spoken honestly and as it was intended to be spoken, pointedly and plainly, in the power of the Spirit of God. Like as of old, when Peter, full of the Holy Ghost, preached the Word, men were "cut to the heart," and cried out—"What shall we do" (Acts. ii. 37); but when Stephen, full of the same Spirit, preached the same Word of God, his hearers, likewise "cut to the heart," gnashed their teeth with rage, and rose up in opposition against the preacher (Acts vii. 54-57): so must it ever be. Preaching that brings no conviction to the conscience and no opposition from the world, whatever it may be,

is not the Word in the power of the Spirit. It always has the double mark of fruit unto God and opposition from the devil.

Neither had been lacking in Inverurie at that time. The little inland town was stirred to its depths, alike by a profound interest in eternal things and by an intense opposition to the Gospel of God. This, no doubt, accounted for the crowded-out hall that Sunday evening, to hear Mr. Ross preach, for, although little was done in the way of advertising in these days, people came from far and near to see and hear the men who said they were "saved, and sure of it," so uncommon was it to hear such things from either pulpit or platform then.

For a fortnight previous to this Sunday night, Mr. Donald Munro and Mr. A. Carnie, two agents of the Northern Evangelistic Society—of which Mr. Ross was at that time superintendent—had been preaching the Gospel in Inverurie. In order to give some idea of the reception they received, and of the condition of things, an extract from a report by the evangelists which appeared in "The Northern Intelligencer"—a journal edited by Mr. Ross—may here be in place. It is as follows:—"Our second meeting took place last night; very few were present but scoffers, and such an exhibition of the devil I never did see before anywhere. There were about thirty scoffers. During the time of prayer they hissed, cheered, and shouted, so that one could not hear his own voice. When I was coming out of the hall, I found them waiting in the

lobby, and there and then they tried to crush me. God be praised that we are counted worthy to suffer for His Name's sake! No doubt but He will cause us to triumph in this place also, as in other places."

That this confidence in God was realised, the subsequent communication of a few days later shows:—

"Thanks be to God! He has begun here also to save the lost. Several conversions took place the last three nights. Last night several of the scoffers came to the meeting with their Bibles marked at certain passages, with the intention of cavilling. These passages were got from an Aberdeen newspaper. Poor fellows! they are glad of any excuse or shelter for their present attitude towards God and His work; in fact, they don't know what to do; no doubt God will yet save some of them." And He did. It was the report that several young lads, companions of our own, had been converted, and were companying with the despised revival preachers, that led a number of us to the Lesser Town Hall on Sunday evening, April 2nd; and that night, before the clock struck twelve, the writer had, through grace, passed the boundary line of the devil's empire and entered the kingdom of God. Yes, blessed be God! that was the day and the hour of our second birth, the greatest event of our life, to which we look back with deepest gratitude, and for which we offer unceasing thanks to God. And there were others born again that night and all through the week following, so that, on the occasion of Mr. Ross's visit that Sunday evening, there were some twenty or

thirty new-born babes in Christ all in the glow of their early love, hungering and thirsting for the Word, and quite a number of old believers who were being helped out of their grave-clothes and into the full liberty of the Gospel of death and resurrection with Christ. To the latter the Gospel came for the first time in its fulness, so that they got what some of them spoke of as "a second conversion," through which they were lifted into the light and liberty of God's salvation. This gave them a full deliverance from doubts and fears and legal bondage, filling their souls with joy unspeakable. This, with the opposition that was raised against the preachers and the work, made things quite lively in the town. Indeed, "the Revivals"—as we were called until another name was found—were the one topic of conversation in all the countryside.

WHAT DID THE EVANGELISTS PREACH?

It may be asked, "What did these men preach, that there was such a stir created?" Simply the truth of God—the old Gospel of Jesus Christ in fresh and living power, with the definite assurance of present salvation to all who believe and receive it, and the certain damnation of all who reject it. The evangelists brought no new doctrine, but they had the old fundamental truths of ruin by sin, redemption by Jesus Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Ghost burning in them as living realities, and preached them in full confidence that God would use His own Word to do His own work.

The Northern Evangelistic Society had no published creed, but on the monthly page of "The Northern Intelligencer" the following appeared as its "motto," which gives a very fair idea of what was preached and how the truth was stated—plainly, pointedly, definitely:—

"Eternal salvation is a free, present, attainable, inalienable, imperishable gift—that is, any man or woman in this world, be he or she the blackest sinner in it, may in one moment be justified for ever from every charge of sin, and may rest as sure of eternal glory as he is certain that in himself he never has deserved and never will deserve, anything but eternal damnation."

There is not much to call "heresy" there, one would think. Yet the cry of "heresy" and "error" was raised and proclaimed from pulpit, press, and platform.

What, then, caused such opposition, and who were the instigators of it? The answer must be—the ministers and office-bearers of the Churches, and especially of the Free Church of Scotland. There were a few exceptions, but, apart from these, the religious leaders of the town and district manifested open hostility to the preachers and the work. It is especially sad to have to add that none were more prejudiced or bitter than those ministers who had been used in the Revivals of 1859 and subsequent years. They evidently could not bear to see anything done outside the bounds of their own "Zion," or to recognise any effort for the

salvation of the people over which they had no control. God has to teach by strange means sometimes, and this opposition of the Churches and ministers was, no doubt, used to shake many of His people free from traditional influences, and thus prepare them to hear and learn His will. Neither Mr. Ross nor the agents of the Northern Evangelistic Society had at this time any thought of severing their connection with the existing Churches. They attended them on the Sunday mornings, and so did all the converts, although it must be confessed there was very little there to attract those who had the life of God in them, and were seeking to have it fed by the ministry of His Word.

OPPOSITION OF THE MINISTERS.

As the work went on, and the Lord saved sinners—some of them respectable sinners of the synagogue—the opposition of the ministers became more virulent. Never—so far as we can remember in Inverurie—did any of them come to the meetings to hear for themselves what was being preached, or to see how the services were conducted; they gained all their information from second-hand sources, mostly from the ungodly; and, as may be imagined, the wildest and most untruthful statements were accepted and declaimed against. In one Aberdeenshire town, at the early stage of the work, a Free Church minister came to the meeting one evening, and took his seat in the body of the hall, with his coat buttoned close up to

cover his clerical collar and thus hinder the evangelist from knowing who he was. The meeting went on as usual; the Word was spoken in the power of the Spirit; and the parson, evidently enraged to the utmost degree, and unable to endure it longer, got up in the middle of the hall, and, folding back his coat, said aloud, "I am one of the black devils with the white ties. Come away, and not listen to this man any longer; he is leading you astray." It had been asserted that some of the preachers had made allusion to the ministers in the terms this man quoted concerning himself—an assertion which was utterly untrue—and this appeal to their prejudices was to arouse opposition—which it did. How could the people be blamed for openly opposing what their spiritual guides taught them was "heresy," and either gave the cold shoulder to, or openly opposed, themselves? Verily, some of these men will have a heavy account to reckon with in the judgment day. Especially sad it is to have to add that he who acted in the manner described was one who, in the Revival of 1859, took an active part in the work, but had become, through sectarian bitterness and prejudice, as barren and dry as the heath in the desert.

"THE NEW PROPHETS."

A licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland, acting as a missionary in Inverurie at this time, was put forward by the clerical party as their champion. He gathered together all the misrepresentations made by

the enemies of the work in all the countryside, and, weaving it together with his own misrepresentations of what he had seen and heard, it was issued in pamphlet form, bearing the ominous title of "The New Prophets." Of course this was welcomed by the ungodly, and, no doubt, used to stifle conviction in many; while the ministers and their satellites circulated it far and wide; and for years after, wherever the work of God was seen and the power of God was manifest, there "The New Prophets" was circulated. Local newspapers echoed the opposition of the ministers, and for many months the towns and villages of Aberdeenshire rang with the doctrines and doings of the "Prophets," so that the advertising of meetings in any new place was quite unnecessary: the interest had preceded the preachers. Notwithstanding all this desperate opposition, blessing from on high was given in every place: sinners of every age and class were born of God; and old believers, in whom the heavenly flame had long burned low, were stirred up, revived, and refreshed, and many of them deeply exercised regarding their connection—nominal as it had become—with religious systems and men who had been the most bitter enemies of the work of God.

When it was found that opposition could not stamp out the work, the next thing tried was imitation of it. In places where nothing save the dry weekly sermon, or, in rare cases, the addition of a mid-week prayer-meeting, had been known for years, evangelistic services were set agoing, and all the "evangelical" min-

isters brought from near and far to undo, if possible, the work of the "New Prophets." It was pitiful in the extreme to see men who had at one time been used of God in preaching His Gospel, lending themselves to this miserable work, and, as was remarked by many who knew them in their better days, without exception stripped of all their power, and utterly useless in the service of God, doing a work for the devil that he could not get one of his own children to do. How solemn for any Heaven-born saint to sink into such a condition! How awful the discovery at the judgment-seat of its dire results! To speak evil of those whom God is using, and to oppose that which they are being helped from the eternal throne to accomplish, is sure to have its recompence here and hereafter—here, in barrenness and judicial blindness; hereafter, in eternal loss in the day of the judgment seat.

These efforts did not always turn out in the way the ministers expected. Two instances well known to the writer may illustrate this:—

A Christian nobleman whose residence was in the vicinity, and who himself took an active part in evangelistic work, especially in the Free Church, of which he was an elder, was asked by a neighbouring minister to preach in his church one Sunday morning, and use his influence to prevent the "congregation" from going to hear the "New Prophets" who were labouring in the place. The earl, instead of taking his place inside his carriage to drive to the church, seated himself beside the coachman, and began at once to inquire

about the preachers and the meetings. The coachman was a Christian; he had attended the meetings regularly, and got much blessing through them, and, no doubt, gave a true account of what he heard and saw, with the result that the earl, stirred in spirit, preached a regular evangelical sermon, saying the very same things as the "Prophets," and finished by praying for them and the work. Some of the hearers said, as they walked home, "He was sent for to curse these people, and, behold, he has blessed them altogether, as Balak said to Balaam of old."

A sermon preached against "Assurance" had the effect of sending one home to search his Bible, with the result that he saw there God's way of salvation, and went right off to the minister and told him so.

Those who were converted under these conditions had, as may be guessed, a good deal to bear. Several were threatened, a few shut up in their homes, and the bulk escorted along the streets to and from the meetings, by bands of scoffers singing songs. Howling crowds assembled outside the hall, and often roughly handled both preachers and converts; but the work went on and increased. It seemed as if what is recorded of Israel in Egypt was again fulfilled—"The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew" (Exod. i., 12), until worldly men who had no religious profession were heard to say, "The ministers may rave and roar as they like; it is evident they cannot put a stop to these men's preaching." There was a joy and brightness all its own in these days which

we have never seen equalled; and, even amid "fiery trial," when stones and turf and rotten eggs flew thick and fast, songs of triumph rose. We often think it would be better for us now to have such a blast occasionally, to clear the floor of chaff, and "harden off" the true plants of the Lord's husbandry who are in danger of being hot-housed to death in artificial heat.

"SQUEEZED OUT" FROM THE CHURCHES.

Neither Mr. Ross nor any of his co-workers had, up to this time, said a word in regard to leaving the Churches, or even hinted at such a step. They still hoped for a "purging" of the unconverted ministers and members, and prayed openly and publicly that such might be speedily granted.

Some twenty or thirty of revived old believers and young converts were in the habit of meeting for an hour on the Sunday morning to pray for God's blessing on the services to be held in the various churches. These were happy and profitable seasons, but, not infrequently, they were followed by an unconverted preacher reading a dry, written sermon, or a bitterly prejudiced minister preaching against the "presumption" of any saying they were saved, or making slighting reference to the "new religion which had come into our midst, disturbing the peace of congregations, where quietness and unity had prevailed." Yes, indeed; the "quietness" of spiritual death and the "unity" of icebergs frozen together.

All this was "squeezing out" God's people who had shared the blessing from the churches, and certainly prevented most of the young believers from becoming "members," much as they were invited, for, strange as it may appear to those who are unacquainted with the devious ways of the world's religion, although the mother birds were to be eschewed as evil, the chickens were perfectly eligible as church members; indeed, some were offered inducements extending to an education for "the ministry," if they would only desist from keeping company with the "Prophets," and become "respectable members of the Church."

After some six to eight weeks of nightly meetings, the evangelists passed on to other fields, and we were left with God and the Word of His grace. An old disused chapel was got, and meetings for prayer and reading of the Word continued in it several times a week, Mr. Ross paying occasional visits, and cheering us on. Geo. R. Masson, Andrew Allan, John M. Campbell, and others, had meetings also, and quite a number were saved there. Mr. Ross was wont to say, "As you go, preach, and disturb the devil everywhere"; and this was done—sometimes, I fear, with more zeal than prudence. A concert held in the Town Hall, at which some of the church choir were to perform was attacked by about a score of us giving tracts at the door; which, when Mr. Ross heard of, he said, "That will make the dust fly"—and it did.

OUTSIDE THE CAMP.

Gradually the Word of God was making its way; and as light was given from that Word, it was followed. Mr. Ross and several others of the evangelists had been baptised, and were teaching to others what God had made a great blessing to themselves. This caused a "winnowing" amongst believers who had up till then followed on together—some obeying the Word, others shying off from various causes. It is truly wonderful how, when family, business, and other considerations arise, and where the truth has to be "bought," some who were ready enough to share the times of Gospel grace and to rejoice in sinners being saved, turn back and walk no longer with the Lord and His disciples, when what is irksome to the flesh and involves a cross comes in the way. When baptisms in the river Don began, the ranks were thinned; the half-hearted ones, who would share the grace but shun the cross, went back, and generally sank down to where they had been before, or joined the opposers—for light rejected or received but unfollowed brings judicial blindness—a form of spiritual disorder from which, it is to be feared, very many in our time suffer. Those who followed the little light they had, got more; others who shunned the path lost what they had. And so it ever must be.

While all this was going on, we were diligently reading the Word, and some were seeing their privilege to gather simply as disciples of the Lord, owning no name but His own. Up to this time we had never

heard of such gatherings, although a small one had existed in the city of Aberdeen, and one or two in the county, for some time. The name of "Brethren," so-called, was unknown; we had never heard or read of such a people. It cannot, therefore, be said that it was to Brethren—either open or close—that believers in the north of Scotland came out, for it is absolutely certain that few ever heard of them, or knew that there were believers meeting outside of all denominations. It is well to know this, for it refutes the theory that all in every place are responsible for and identified with certain doctrines and doings, which are said to have existed thirty years before there was an assembly of believers gathered in the Lord's Name in the north of Scotland, so far as we are aware.

A LORD'S DAY AT OLD RAYNE.

It was on a summer Lord's Day morning that four of us started on foot to Old Rayne, where we had heard that a company of believers had begun to gather, outside of all denominations, to worship God and show forth the Lord's death in the breaking of bread. We had seen this to be our privilege in the Word, and we were anxious to see it in practice. After a delightful eight-mile walk, a rest by a spring of clear water, a psalm from the Word, and a little season in prayer, we started on the last stage of our journey, and arrived at the village a quarter of an hour before the hour of meeting. We were told the gather-

ing was in the joiner's shop, which was easily found. A few brethren were standing at the door, who gave us a hearty welcome. A brother who had been in Inverurie during the work, and had gone to reside in that district, introduced us to the elder brethren, and we were received as "young believers from Inverurie, where as yet there is no gathering," and we got a royal welcome. "Receiving" nowadays is often a very mechanical affair, but then it was a welcome to heart and home as well as to all the privileges and persecutions shared by those who had assembled. We had scarce been seated, when who should come in but Mr. Ross, who had only just seen from the Word his place "outside the camp," and his privilege and responsibility of gathering with fellow-believers in the Lord's Name alone. When his eye fell on us, he held up both hands in astonishment, saying, "What! have Inverurie folks become heretics too?"

It was a wonderful gathering—the first of its kind we had ever seen. The place was a country joiner's shop, with whitewashed walls, plank seats supported by cut clogs of wood, a plain deal table covered with a white cloth, on which the bread and wine stood near the centre; there was no platform, no chair, no chairman. We had often gone to hear the Lord's servants, and to seek His blessing on the Word spoken by them; here we had come to meet the Lord Himself, to hear His voice, to see no man save Jesus only. The seats filled up, mostly by middle-aged country people, all plainly clad; there were no flowers or

feathers, no gold ornaments or sparkling jewels there. When all had assembled, the door was shut, and we felt that we were shut in with God.

Solemn silence prevailed. There was no haste, but a season of true waiting upon God. We had come there to worship God—not to *get*, but to *give;* and the Spirit was there to guide.

There was true worship there that day, such as has to be shared to be understood: it cannot be explained. Never before had we heard such singing—possibly never shall we hear it again till we go to Heaven—not the music, but the *heart* that was in it—true melody, produced by the Spirit operating in the hearts of the worshippers. It is not to be expected that everything was done "after the due order," for these believers were groping their way out of the mazes of worldly Christianity, and following light as it dawned upon them from the Word. A "critic" would have seen plenty to find fault with. But there was heart and soul in all that was said and done; the prayers led you right into the presence of the Lord, the praise was like a fountain springing up, and whatever words of ministry were given were fresh as the manna freshly gathered from the dew and newly fallen from heaven. The bread and wine passed round—it was the first time we had handled the sacred symbols. We *stood* as we partook of them, like Israel in Egypt—some of the old farmers literally staff in hand—and when the hymn was raised and sung, still standing—

"Come, Lord, come, we wait for Thee,
We listen still for Thy returning;
Thy loveliness we long to see,
For Thee the lamp of hope is burning,
Come, Lord, come!

it actually seemed as if we were on the move *upward;* we certainly were *waiting* for the call.

Mr. Ross took little part; his heart seemed too full for utterance, but he did pray with great earnestness at the close, when old Sandy Stewart, the joiner, asked the prayers of fellow-believers that "God might go with him," while he went to "the parish minister's with a word from God," which, said he, "I got for him while sitting at the Lord's Table, and I'm going away to give it to him." And, sure enough, he rose and went, lest by delaying he might grieve the Spirit of God.

Mr. Ross preached that afternoon in Andrew Clark's barn, standing on a box in the door, half of his congregation being inside, the other half in the farmyard. He spoke on "Honouring God," and made the following remark, which stuck to us, "Go in for pleasing God; He will never let you be the loser. Keep in with God, no matter whom you displease; it pays to keep on good terms with Him. The folk will tell you that if you leave the Kirk your trade will gang awa, and your wife and bairns will be left to starve. But it's a lie of the devil's and he is the father of it. God never let any man starve that honoured Him." Then, unbuttoning his coat, and putting his thumbs in

his vest under the arms, he said, in a voice like thunder, "Do I look like as if I were starved?" The effect was wonderful; we came away strengthened and cheered, determined, through grace, to "stand like the brave, with our face to the foe."

GATHERING UNTO THE NAME OF THE LORD.

That first taste of the sweets of Christian fellowship left no desire whatever to return to the dreary waste of Presbyterianism, with its motley throng of unconverted worshippers and its human arrangements, which rendered inoperative the truth of the priesthood of all believers, and put one man up to be in himself evangelist, pastor, teacher, and everything else, the only channel through which the Spirit of God could work or act, either in worship or ministry. For several weeks a company of believers, old and young, met several nights a week to search the Scriptures and "seek a right way" for ourselves in God's fear. There were many difficulties to be faced. Some of the older ones feared disorders, and suggested that certain should be appointed as "elders," to control things a little, after the fashion of the old "Scotch Baptists," whose elders call on those whom they consider fitted to take part—a kind of half-way house between one-man ministry and the recognition of the priesthood of all believers guided by the Spirit of God. That did not satisfy some; they wanted to see a "thus saith the Lord" for it, and would not be satisfied without it.

But none could be found; so that had to go. In the autumn of 1871 the first gathering of believers in the Name of the Lord Jesus alone, outside of all sects, was formed, meeting first in a disused shoemaker's shop, later in a small meeting-room, where, with church-goers scowling as they passed, urchins throwing missiles, cabbages, and sometimes live crows inside, and pushing sticks through the windows while the meetings were going on, a few believers began to gather, the greater part of whom are now in Heaven, while some of that little company remain till the present time.

THE FIRST CONFERENCE.

A continuous revival and work of grace had been going on all through the Garioch district for nearly two years, and in other parts of the country as well. At Oyne, Old Rayne, Insch, Kennethmont, Braco, and Inverurie there had been many saved. In the Buchan district a good work had been done at New Deer, Gowanwell, and Newburgh; while in the Speyside vicinity times of ingathering had been seen at Rothes, Keith, Boharm, and Aberlour. But these places were far sundered, and believers seldom had the opportunity of meeting with each other, or for having seasons of united prayer and fellowship in the things of God. Conferences—except as they existed at Perth and other places on Presbyterian lines—were unknown. The great gatherings at Huntly in the Castle Park had long gone by, and there was a feeling of general isola-

tion among the children of God. Mr. Ross, who was always quick to discern the need, proposed that a "revival meeting"—for so it was announced—should be held at a convenient centre, to which believers, old and young, from all parts, might come by road and rail, to have a day's spiritual intercourse and mutual help in the things of God. The place fixed on was Old Rayne; and the announcement appeared in the "Intelligencer" for July, 1871, that a "Fellowship Tea Meeting" would be held at 12.30, and a meeting for Gospel preaching at 2 p.m. It went on to say that an extensive revival of God's work had been in progress in the Garioch district, and that "revival believers are anxious to meet, know, and sympathise with one another." The gathering was in the open air, on a green sward near to the joiner's shop where believers gathered. A great many assembled from all parts, and God gave a season of rich blessing. There was no chairman, no fixed speakers, no pre-arrangement. Mr. Ross read I. Corinthians, chapter xiv., and reminded us that "God is here to take charge of the meeting"; and He did.

Conferences—larger in numbers—were held at Inverurie in 1872 and in Aberdeen in 1873, where the same Divine principle of ministry according to the guidance of the Spirit, acting through those whom the Lord has called and fitted to edify His people, and continue to the present time. May they ever maintain the first principles and retain the early freshness of ministry in the unction of the Spirit, and thus prove as

"streams in the desert" to those who assemble there! It is too often assumed nowadays that all who come together are in a clean and right spiritual condition, and need only smooth and delectable truth spoken to them; but in these early conferences searching and humbling truths, grappling with the conscience, were freely dealt out, and God's people were caused to "consider their ways"; while truths connected with separation from the world, its sins, its follies, and its religion, were freely spoken; and many were helped thereby. Platitudes and "clever" addresses by selected speakers, who trim their words so as to give no offence, would have found no place in these days. The pity is that they should be allowed to take the place of "wholesome words" and "healthful teaching" such as the saints of God always need in such gatherings now. An apt remark made by Mr. Ross on this subject may here be given—"Some assemblies of believers which are continually hearing pleasant things, and who are pandered to by their leaders, are like a pretty keepsake covered with a glass shade—only to be admired. They are of no use whatever for God. Carnal believers will not endure the sound and healthy teaching of God's Word spoken in the Holy Ghost. They will rather run after the flattering, flash-in-the-pan talk of popular preachers, who take care not to touch their consciences." There was none of this kind of flattery in his preaching. It was solemn and searching in the extreme, and had that in it which "stuck" for many days.

The inevitable reaction of being too much occupied with "Church Position" set in some years after assemblies had multiplied, and questions about "true ground," "right position," and such-like began to crop up here and there. Mr. Ross was no stickler for such matters, nor had he any sympathy with those who spent their time and occupied others with them. He gave great offence to some on one occasion by saying at a conference, "There are some of you continually talking about your position. Christians who are always talking and talking about being in the right position, but who are bringing forth nothing for God, are like a hen sitting on rotten eggs. Their position is right enough, but nothing comes out of it, because their condition is all wrong."

PIONEERING THE VILLAGES.

It was by no means easy work for those who pioneered, breaking up new ground, and assailing the devil in his own strongholds, in these days. Some of the inland towns and villages were like Jericho—"straitly shut up" under the power of priestcraft. The people knew that their leaders were enemies of the Gospel, and they considered they were perfectly justified in roughly handling those who preached it, or, failing that, in preventing them from entering with it. The Donside village of Kintore, some three miles from Inverurie, was a place where the devil assumed the latter attitude. No place could be found for meetings or to lodge the preachers. But

Mr. Ross was not easily discomfited. He began preaching in the open air, amid great opposition. An aged Christian widow, who had long prayed for a revival, gave him a bed in her humble, thatch-roofed cottage, which consisted of two apartments, the one occupied by Mr. Ross being minus two panes of glass in its single window. To keep out the wind, he placed his big Bible against the empty frame during the night. Things like these did not trouble him; he never mentioned them; we found this out when we visited him in his "manse," where he was as happy as if he had been in a palace. This aged widow was the only Christian in the place who would stand by him on the street. He sang and prayed and preached himself for several nights surrounded by scoffers. A few of us went along from Inverurie one night which turned out wet, and we found him in a barn conducting a meeting, his congregation consisting of four young men sitting at one end scoffing, while he sat by the side of the fan at the other on a "wisp of straw," singing the hymn—

> "The foxes had rests and the birds had their nests
> In the shades of the cedar tree;
> But Thy couch was the sod, O Thou Son of God,
> In the deserts of Galilee."

It was rather a disheartening scene, but he was not cast down. Coming out at the close, he said, "Praise God! the worst wife in all Kintore was converted yesterday; that's something to raise the devil; and," said he, shaking his head, "he's very angry at losing his property."

There was nothing in such circumstances to please the flesh; everything was uphill—all was against God. But it was in such a school and by such untoward events that the worker's faith was matured, and his confidence in a present, living, loving God made strong.

The work spread to KEMNAY, where hundreds of granite workers in the quarries—mostly very ungodly men—were reached; and, amid the usual opposition—which in this case took the form of taking the tiles from the roof of the meeting-place and dropping stones through the aperture on the heads of the preachers—many were saved. Frequently, bands of young believers walked up from Inverurie, and sometimes returned in the early hours of the morning, singing the songs of Zion. In the villages of Oldmeldrum, Oyne, Insch, and Rhynie, continuous work was carried on for months, and many saved—Mr. Ross usually coming along to see and share the work, and by his ministry strengthen what the Lord had wrought.

WORK AND WAR IN HUNTLY.

Huntly was one of the last places Mr. Ross visited before removing to Edinburgh; and there the storm of opposition raged with a violence unequalled in any other place. It was here that Duncan Matheson, the earnest evangelist and bosom friend of Mr. Ross, was converted. Here he and others preached the Gospel with great power and blessing.

In the days of the godly Duchess of Gordon, thousands gathered in the Castle Park, near the town of

Huntly, where the Gospel was preached by the best and most honoured soul-winners of these times, and many won to Christ. Some old believers still live who shared these never-to-be-forgotten times, and tell how, under the arousing appeals of Duncan Matheson and Brownlow North, the stripping and searching ministry of Dr. W. P. Mackay of Hull, and the full-orbed death, resurrection, and union with Christ Gospel of J. Denham Smith, hundreds passed out of darkness and bondage into the light and liberty of the kingdom of God, seated on the green sward or under the canvas tent where, all day long, anxious ones awakened on the field were pointed to the Saviour.

In 1872 all this had subsided, and spiritual death reigned, when Mr. Munro and several fellow-labourers began to preach in the courthouse, and subsequently in a large hall. We remember being there over a Saturday and Sunday, and seeing something of the early stages of the work of God and the opposition of the enemy. About half a dozen scoffers sat in the courthouse, under the terrific fire of judgment to come, until they could endure it no longer, then rose in a body and went to an adjoining public-house to try to stifle their convictions in strong drink. But "the Lord's hook" was in them, and they could not rest there, so back they came to hear more. Some wonderful trophies of grace were won, and the fury of the enemies of the Lord waxed hotter, until they threw off all religious disguise, and rushed the platform, knocking the preachers to the floor and shamefully

abusing them. Writing of the work in Huntly, Mr. Ross, who had his full share of the abuse which emptied itself weekly through the columns of a local newspaper, says—

"In this town the unhallowed sham in which the people are being deceived has been laid aside by many, and the enmity to the truth of God manifested was almost beyond precedent in this or in any other country. And the curious thing is, that the converts in general do not see that they ought to be separate at once and for ever from that through which they were nearly in hell before they discovered their whereabouts. To that which God used and blessed there was given savage, brutal, and cruel treatment, worthy of Spain in the palmy days of the Inquisition. God's honest truth has laid bare the sores, and they are *very sore*. We have often thought that the scoffers in this county might some day join with the hypocrites, and have a newspaper organ of their own, to be called *The Man of Sin*, for the advocacy of hypocrisy, sham, white lies, and persecution. To all appearance this is not unlikely now to be realised—that is, if shadows foretell coming events."

It was scarcely to be expected that the truth thus plainly told would be relished by those who were affected by it; but Mr. Ross was not the man to keep back his sword from blood, or to take the edge off for fear of giving offence. He believed it was a sacred trust committed to him by God to unmask hypocrisy wherever he found it, and to leave God to look after

the results. Would to God we had more like him and less of the fashionable trimming of God's truth to make it palatable to religious worldlings and carnal Christians, who, if they were made to smart under the sharp edge of the Word, in the mighty power of the Spirit, would either flee or rise up in opposition against those who brought the message from God against which the core of their enmity is directed! Popular preachers of "moderation" and "charity" seem to think that, by trimming the truth of all that gives offence, and omitting all that would cause a winnowing of the chaff from among the wheat, they will get Christ and the Devil, God and the world, the flesh and the Spirit, to run in pair, and thus be able to carry on what they pompously call "the Lord's work" on a much more extensive scale and in such an attractive and pleasing style that not a dog will move his tongue, or a shot be fired from the enemy's battery. Nay, more: that the world's newspapers and religious magazines will advertise the number of converts, and tell of the "success" of the meetings, and ungodly ministers and church members will give "votes of thanks" and purses of sovereigns, with pressing invitations to return, to the preachers. Mr. Ross had not learned to reckon after this fashion. He believed in the old-fashioned doctrine of the Son of God—"If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My sayings, they will keep yours also" (John xv. 20); and a coming day will show that he was right.

The fruits of the work in Huntly are to be found over the face of the whole earth, and some who then opposed the truth have since, through grace, been conquered by it, and become themselves witnesses to its saving and sanctifying power.

LAST VISITS AND HOME.

Brief visits were paid once and again to the old battle-ground and fields of labour by the aged warrior and workman, and much appreciated by the children of God who knew him, while younger ones who had been born since the days of his active service in Aberdeenshire were helped and encouraged by the patriarch now grown grey in his Master's service, yet retaining the spiritual vigour and dew of his youth, lifting up his voice, crying aloud, and sparing not, as in the days of old. His last visit was in 1902, and it was short. He was not at all well, and he left hurriedly for America, where, eight months later, he ended his long day of active service, and exchanged the noise of battle for the rest of home.

Few men in this generation have "obtained help from God" to accomplish the work he did. From the north-east coast of Scotland, from its neglected inland villages and distant parishes, from the mining villages of Midlothian, and, later, from the crowded cities of the great American continent, thousands of ransomed, blood-washed saints will gather around the throne, who were reached by the Word, convicted of sin, and converted to God through his labours and ministry.

By his call from earth to heaven the Church and the world are both poorer, although few in either may ever know it. The Lord whom he served, and whose Name he sought to own and honour, will fully bring to light and reward in the day of His judgment-seat all that was done and suffered through grace by His servant DONALD ROSS.

Work in Buchan.

By John Davidson, Gowanwell.

IN the revival days of 1859, Gordon Furlong, Reginald Radcliffe, and Duncan Matheson all visited New Deer, I believe through the invitation of Mr. Gardiner, the Free Church minister, who was very hearty in what was then called "revival work." Many were awakened and truly converted. Mr. Ross at that time was labouring chiefly amongst the coast villages, but we often heard of him and his work. In 1870, after the Northern Evangelistic Society was begun, the New Deer Y.M.C.A. gave an invitation to two of the preachers labouring with Mr. Ross in that mission, and in the Spring of 1871 John M'Gaw and John Smith came to New Deer and began meetings in the Public Hall. The first Lord's Day evening a number of the religious people of the neighbourhood were present. But by many of them the preaching was not relished, for we saw no more of them after that night. God's Word was spoken plainly and pointedly in the power of the Holy Ghost, and some were awakened. Some of God's people were stirred up to prayer and brought of their families and friends to

hear the Word. Night after night souls were saved, and, as the interest spread, opposition was aroused. It is wonderful how God's Gospel plainly and faithfully preached stirs up the enmity of the natural heart, and arouses the opposition not only of the "lewd fellows of the baser sort," but of many who profess the Christian name. Notwithstanding this, the work went on for many weeks, and quite a number of old and young were truly converted to God. The meetings were transferred to Gowanwell, nearly four miles from New Deer, and there God continued to give blessing with the Word, many coming nightly from New Deer and the surrounding country. At the close of a ten weeks' campaign, there was a tea meeting held, at which about thirty publicly testified to the power of the grace of God in their salvation, while many who had been believers before were revived, refreshed, and led into the fuller liberty of the Gospel of Christ. By and by a number followed the Lord in baptism, and gathered together simply in the Lord's name to show forth His death in His own appointed way, outside of all denominations, owning no name but that of the Lord Jesus. Mr. Ross occasionally visited us then and in the years following, and we all enjoyed his ministry, pungent and searching as it always was, and were much helped through him in the truth of God.

All along the coast there was much blessing through his labours and those of the brethren associated with him. The day of Christ alone will fully

declare what God wrought during those memorable years.

Mr. Ross was mightily used of God during the year 1865 in Newburgh, also in Fraserburgh and Cullen. Very many were saved at that time. He was a most self-denying labourer, often lodging in very comfortless quarters, in order that he might be in the midst of the work of God. On one occasion I remember him telling that his lodgings were so untidy, and the food set before him so unclean, that the only thing he could eat in confidence was a hen's egg. We had him with us for a week on his last visit to Scotland in 1902, and had much fellowship with him in the things of God. One had to know him privately to fully appreciate his worth. "Do not expect much from me," he wrote from Wick previous to his visit, "I am getting old and decrepit, and more in need of getting than giving. When one reaches my age, his theology is boiled down to—'Christ died for the ungodly.'" We all felt the parting very much. He said—"I'll soon be going home. All is well. He has the government upon His shoulders." And now the aged warrior is at rest. He died in harness as he so much desired, a pioneer to the end.

By Mrs. Davidson, Gowanwell.

My first acquaintance of Mr. Ross was in 1865. He was at that time superintendent of the North-East Coast Mission. The village of Newburgh being on the coast, it was often visited by him, along

with the late Mr. Brand, of Aberdeen, and others. I remember being at his first meeting there. It was very small. He was much impressed with the spiritual destitution of the people of the village. He stayed at the Temperance Inn—I could scarcely call it a hotel, but just a respectable house where two or three could be put up. He left next morning, but, before leaving, he told the master of the house that he was coming back, as the Lord had laid the place on his heart. "Oh," said he, "you need not care for coming here. Your kind of preaching wouldn't *take*. "But," said Mr. Ross, "I'm coming." And so he came.

During the first week very few came to the meetings, but, notwithstanding, the interest began. His landlady was the first to be saved, then the daughter of a Free Church elder. When he saw that the Lord was working, he began an after-meeting in one of his landlady's rooms. It was often crowded to the door, where he stood asking everyone as they passed out how it was for eternity with them. We were so unaccustomed with such a mode of procedure that we were puzzled to know how to answer him. Many passed from death into life at these after-meetings. Some who did not stay were saved in their homes. I specially remember the manifest leading of the Spirit in the case of two careless young men, who, while the open-air meeting was going on, stood in the distance and scoffed. They decided to go to the inside meeting and see the "fun." Having borrowed a New Testament, they went in. After the opening

hymn and prayer, Mr. Ross gave out his text. After doing so, he looked up, and said—"Oh, people, many of you don't know your Bibles; the uncut leaves condemn you." One of the young men trembled when he discovered that the leaves of the borrowed Testament were uncut at the place where the preacher had chosen his text. God laid hold of him. His sins rose up before him like a mountain. He had no rest until he was enabled to "look and live." A sailor's wife wrote to her husband in Sunderland that she was a "new creature in Christ Jesus." This made him very uneasy. When the ship came to the bar, the pilots, who went to guide the ship into the harbour, told him his wife was "wrong in her mind." He was very angry. However, that night he came to the meeting. The strong man was bowed beneath his load of sin and led to Christ. It was truly a wonderful time. One old woman was so overjoyed that she held up her hands and blessed the Lord that "her eyes had seen His salvation." Mr. Ross was greatly blessed all round the east coast. I remember being at a meeting which was held by him in Fraserburgh. After he had finished preaching, he asked one of the brethren to pray. I was sitting near him, and he whispered to me, "The blessing is coming; I feel it." In a few minutes, two fine young men stood up and cried, "I am saved; I see it all." One of them is with the Lord, and the other remains to this day following "in the way." Many preachers and missionaries came to help when the work was going on, such as

Major Ross, Messrs. Tytler, Dewar, Buglass, and others. Some of those who were saved at that time are with the Lord, while quite a number of us are still in the body. The honoured soul-winner is now "with Christ," and many from these shores who are the fruit of his incessant labours have doubtless welcomed him there, while others who are still in the wilderness look forward with joy to the great foregathering of the resurrection morning, when preacher and converts shall gather around the Lord.

"Come, Lord, come, we wait for Thee,
We listen still for Thy returning:
Thy loveliness we long to see,
For Thee the lamp of hope is burning.
Come, Lord, come!"

By Alexander Ironside, New Deer.

For about thirty years the Lord's servant, Donald Ross, had come occasionally to these parts, and never without leaving marks of his ministry. His words were as goads, and stuck to one. The last time he was here, one said—"He speaks as from the eternal world." Speaking at a meeting in New Deer, he said he was glad to see so many of God's people present. "Christians are the only friends God has upon this earth; all others are His enemies." In exhorting us to live for God, he said—"Some of you will not give your money to the Lord, to spread His Gospel among the perishing, but He can station an apothecary upon you when you will have to give it up." He was most

anxious to see young men who had grace and ability spending their strength in spreading the name of Jesus. "Some of you," he said, "are well fitted to preach Christ to the perishing; and because you don't do it, you have to dig stumps. Others are spoiled through 'sparkling,' for, mind you, courting and evangelising don't go together." He very strongly emphasised the need of preachers being right with God and in the Spirit. "Nothing else," he said, "is of any use whatever. If people come and go, come and go to your meetings, and are not either converted or enraged, you may depend upon it your Gospel is *gey thin*."

Work in the Garioch District.

By George Taylor, Oyne.

IN the spring of 1870, three godly men—all of them now with the Lord—Alexander Stewart, Old Rayne; Robert Philip, Oyne; and Andrew Clark, Buchanston—met together for prayer, to ask God for a reviving among His own people and an awakening among the perishing. Vital godliness and spiritual life were at a very low ebb in these times, alike among ministers and people. The Churches were dead, and most of the ministers unconverted or in a worldly and spiritually useless condition. In answer to prayer, the Lord sent his servant Donald Ross to begin meetings, which were held nightly in Andrew Clark's barn at Buchanston. Part of each day was spent by Mr. Ross alone with God among the broom and whins, praying for a manifestation of His power in the awakening and salvation of sinners. No doubt it was prayer that brought down the blessing. God sent an awakening through the district. Souls were saved, and the Lord's people revived and blessed. Other labourers followed, and the work spread to Oyne, Insch, and Old Rayne. The whole district was stirred and shaken by

power from on high, and there was great opposition raised against the work, especially by the ministers and religious people. Some who had taken an active part in a former work of grace, opposed through prejudice, and were left high and dry. The Lord used this to shake His people out from the denominations. In the first instance, they met for prayer and reading of the Word. Light arose, and they found it written that it was their privilege to gather simply as disciples of Christ, in His Name alone, to break bread on the first day of the week, which they did first on Lord's Day, April 23rd, 1871, in a joiner's shop at Old Rayne belonging to Alexander Stewart, one of the first three who met to pray. There the Lord manifested Himself and gathered His own. Some wonderful times were experienced there, which those who shared can never forget. There was little knowledge of the Word, but much love and grace among the saints, and the power of the Spirit was mightily felt, and the meetings were seasons of rich spiritual blessing. Our dear departed brother, Donald Ross, was largely instrumental in the great and blessed work which the Lord wrought in these parts, and we all loved and esteemed him very much.

The following was written by Mr. Ross, over thirty years ago, to one of the first little assemblies of believers gathered unto the Name of the Lord Jesus in the north of Scotland, at Old Rayne, Aberdeenshire. Its wholesome and weighty words of exhortation, counsel, and warning are just as much needed now as

they were then and there. May God abundantly bless them!

"Aberdeen, Jan. 13, 1872.

"It occurred to me, that if a few words of exhortation were in the Holy Ghost given to you as a Church, they might not only be well received but also useful.

"I. Your existence as separate from the surrounding confusion is scarcely worth its room in God's earth, excepting in so far as you walk in the Spirit; in that case only do you walk with God and God walk in you, and you look at all your surroundings from God's standpoint.

"II. In order to your spirituality or walking with God, there must be communion with Jesus, and as all you are and all you need is in Him only, so be taken up with Him. 'They went and told Jesus' is said of others. Let this be true of you also.

"III. As a Church—'Bear ye one another's burdens." This is different from bearing one another's faults. Improper conduct in any one of your number rebuke sharply, lovingly, and honestly, 'hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.' When any one of your number confesses, forgive, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. But let not sin lie by any means on a brother's head. Pride will be your greatest trial.

"IV. It has been often said by wise people, 'Consult the town clerk of Ephesus, who said, "Do nothing rashly."' And take heed you do not mistake mere natural, fleshly excitement for the holy, near, calm joy

and power of the Holy Ghost. All are more or less liable to this error, especially youth, with strong tempers, passions, etc.

"V. Give to the people and to one another God's Word, and you will find it will be offensive enough, without any human additions. Give them also the Cross, which cuts off everything. The offence of both truth and Cross will be quite sufficient to make you a separate people without any other separating element.

"VI. Beware of raillery. Read 2 Peter ii. 10, 11, and Jude verses 8, 9. Draw a distinction between enlightening one another and raillery; especially in preaching the Gospel to sinners, beware of what you say, for the devil will take up the attention of the people with the *out-of-place* things in your address, instead of the truth you present. Have you noticed how careful the Lord was in making arrangements that there should be nothing peculiar in the *serving priests*, lest the people should be taken up with their malformations rather than with the Lord Himself?

"VII. Let your *young men especially* take care of pride and conceit. Let 'the younger be subject to the elder.' If they are not in a spirit to receive advice, they are not in a state to preach; and when they do preach, let them beware of mere empty, frothy volubility, which is of no use to man nor beast, but rather injurious to the hearers, and, besides, raises up obstacles against other preaching. Many a meeting have I seen killed by young men. Let the young men study their Bibles and *know* the truth they preach, and never

preach other people's preaching. The person, whether old or young, who has no pleasure or joy in searching his Bible, is not in a state to preach to anybody else, and much better he should not do it.

"VIII. 'Walk honestly towards them that are without,' and the Lord give you grace in all things.

"Your servant in the Gospel,

DONALD ROSS."

It was given to the Lord's servant—now gone to his rest—in a measure we have seldom seen equalled, to discern the need and to supply the fitting word of warning, counsel, or rebuke, as well as the message of exhortation, comfort, and cheer to the Lord's people. The evils pointed out to the infant assembly over thirty years ago, visible to the spiritual eye then, are still with us. Few there are among the people of God, who have any sense of what is due to His Holy Name, but have mourned over their presence and withering effects in the assemblies of the saints.

BY JOHN SCOTT, OF SHREWSBURY.

Although I knew Mr. Ross before, I was not intimately acquainted with him till the latter end of 1869. He had some time previously severed his connection with the North-East Coast Mission, and set himself to evangelise the inland towns and villages, assisted by a number of earnest labourers. His success was tremendous. He awoke a gale, and sounded a

blast that disturbed and shook the North of Scotland from the Grampians to the shores of Caithness. Previous to that time there were few, very few, assemblies gathered unto the Name of the Lord in the North of Scotland, but in course of a few years such assemblies were to be found throughout the whole country, most of them founded either directly or indirectly through the service of our departed brother.

I had the unspeakable privilege of hearing him preach the Word frequently in the Pitcaple, Oyne, and Old Rayne districts. It was a time never to be forgotten. Hundreds were awakened and saved, and many old believers got such a rousing up that they were wont to speak of it as a "second conversion." The whole countryside was stirred, and wherever Mr. Ross and his co-workers went the Lord gave blessing. At Flinder, where our beloved brother Peter Ferries lived, and where there was an assembly of believers gathered unto the Lord's Name, at Oyne, Insch, Braco, and, indeed, all around, the river of blessing flowed.

Subsequent to his work in the north, he removed with his family to Edinburgh. While residing there, he did much substantial work in that city and in the villages of Midlothian, of which I was a witness, and had the privilege of being a sharer. In the mining village of Rosewell the Lord did a good work, amid much opposition. When Mr. Ross went there first (guided, as he believed he was, by the Lord), there was no place to be had for the tent, nor to lodge the preachers. Difficulties seemed insurmountable, but

his faith in "the living God," as he delighted to speak of Him, never failed him. A humble widow opened her home, and God saved her and some of her family. Many were awakened, and the enemies of the Lord began to rage. The tent was cut down, and had to be watched by Mr. Ross and myself in turn during the night. A school was opened, and meetings continued for many weeks by Mr. Ross and others. Mr. W. C. Johnston, of Glasgow, then living in Edinburgh, carried them on after.

The fruits of this work remain in many parts of the world to the present time.

As a brother and fellow-labourer in the Gospel, he was gracious, considerate, and most helpful. Many a young and inexperienced preacher he helped and encouraged when he discerned there was a true desire to serve the Lord; but he had little patience with those who assumed to be what they were not, or to do what they were not fitted for.

As a pioneer evangelist, a breaker-up of fresh ground, Mr. Ross was incomparably the most diligent servant of God I ever had the privilege of knowing.

[The writer of the above was called to be with Christ a few weeks after his fellow-labourer, Mr Ross.]

By George Adam, Stranraer.

I have never met anyone who so "travailed in birth" for souls as he did. A young lad whom I sent with a conveyance to the station to meet him, in 1869, told that, no sooner was Mr. Ross seated be-

side him, than he began to pray for his conversion; and before very long he was converted, and has gone on well ever since. The desire for souls was the ruling passion of his life. He spared no pains, and was deterred by no difficulties in his efforts to carry the Gospel to the neglected and the poor. He was with us at Kennethmont, where we then lived, and it was a great pleasure to have him under our roof. At the neighbouring village of Rhynie God used him much; and at Huntly a great work was done, with much opposition from the religious world. He was very quick in gauging the spiritual condition of those with whom he came in contact. Believers with bad consciences gave him a wide berth, unless they were prepared to be searched out and put right. "Revelling in doctrine and living in sin," he would say; and under his ministry the truth so told on the conscience, that sin had to be dealt with and confessed, or the hearer disappear. Had we such ministry in the Spirit's power now in assemblies of believers (and it is greatly needed), no doubt many who are unprepared to stand the truth and be set right with God by it, would be blown outside them.

By M. J. Nairn, Aberdeen.

I remember the Lord's departed servant, Mr. Ross, being in Rhynie in the year 1866, having a series of meetings in the Congregational Chapel. It was a stirring time; we had never heard the truth of God so plainly spoken, or the Gospel so fully declared. To

many of us who had been saved for some time it was like a fresh conversion. A number were truly saved at that time, and the power of God was mightily present. Mr. Ross had keen discernment, and could put his finger very readily on the hindrance keeping a sinner from the Saviour. One night he remarked to my father, pointing to a young woman to whom he had been speaking in the after-meeting, "That young woman is in a great strait between her pride and her necessity." She let her pride go, and was saved that night. Speaking one night in a joiner's shop at Drum-minor, he was showing from the Word what sin had made man, and how law could scarce restrain the propensities of the human heart. "No," said he, "they have to take one of you now and again, and hang you up by the neck, like a crow among the potatoes, to frighten the rest."

In 1872 he visited Rhynie again. This was after he had come outside of all denominationalism to a rejected Christ, owning His name alone. Some time before this visit, my father was in Aberdeen, and Mr. Ross asked, "Is there any room in Rhynie for God?" My father replied that his house was open, and that, if no better place could be found, he would give his workshop and make it as suitable for meetings as possible. "That is all I want," said Mr. Ross. When he came, he soon found that his changed position ecclesiastically caused many of his old friends to give him the cold shoulder. But he laboured away patiently, and it became manifest to some that God

was with him, and that the truth he spoke, although very humbling and cutting to the flesh, was the Word of God, and could not be got rid of; and it wrought effectually in some at least. He was never afraid to speak the Word, although he knew it might give offence to some, or keep back what he believed we needed to hear. Of some who seemed to have lost their early freshness and to be bearing the marks of departure from God, he would say, "You are like my greatcoat, six years old: you have seen better days." Some who are serving the Lord in the mission field were saved then in early days, and others have gone home to Heaven. In private, Mr. Ross endeared himself to us all; he was so kind and unselfish, so easily pleased, and so grateful for every little attention given him in the house.

Much of his work received no commendation, no reward on earth; he was misunderstood and misrepresented by many. But how blessed to know that the Lord who knew him best has marked all that He appreciated, and will manifest His approval of it in a coming day!

Speyside Recollections.

By Mrs. Innes, Netherton.

THE first time Mr. Ross visited Aberlour was in the spring of 1869, when he was superintendent of the North-East Coast Mission. Two of the agents of that Mission had been here previous to this; and, although the people did not turn out in any number to hear the Word, there were two conversions. Meetings were begun in the village of Aberlour a few weeks later, and there the Lord did a great work; many old and young were at that time brought to the Lord. Mr. Ross came to help in the work, and he preached and taught from the Word what was new to most of us—the believer's assurance, his place in Christ, separation from the world, and other truths. Those who were newly saved, and others who had been Christians before, drank in the Word, which came with much power to our hearts, bringing joy and gladness. It was a glorious time, and will never be forgotten by those who shared it.

Speaking of the workers of the Mission, he said, "I wish there were seventy more to let loose, like a pack of hounds, to hunt the people out of their holes; aye, and to chase some of you who are God's people

out of your hiding-places, where you are sneaking away to heaven as if you were ashamed to own your Father, hiding any light you have beneath a bushel. God have mercy on you, and shake you up, so that people may be sure what you are!"

He was very severe on worldly Christians who were settled upon their lees, with no difference between them and unconverted worldlings. He would say, "Hoarding up your bawbees, and sometimes putting them into a bag with holes, where they slip out the wrong way." He never courted anyone's favour, or feared to speak the truth, whether it gave offence or not. How much faithful men of his kind are needed, who will seek no man's smile and fear no man's frown, but honour God, seeking His glory!

He exposed and laid bare the hollow sham of the world's religious systems, with their unconverted ministers and members, with a force and power that carried conviction to our consciences, and opened the eyes of many who were associated with them to the sin of being unequally yoked with unbelievers. He was not at this time fully separated from the denominations, although he was much exercised about his path; so that, when some asked, "What can we do, or where can we go?" he replied, "I dinna ken that mysel'."

Some of us found it impossible to go any longer, and for a time went nowhere, but searched the Word of God, seeking light on our path. Baptism was made plain to us, and several were baptised and went for a

time with the Baptists, who were nearer the truth than what we had left.

It was about this time that Mr. Ross gave up his superintendency of the Mission, and soon after came out from all connection with systems, to be the servant of the Lord alone, guided by His Spirit, and controlled by His Word.

He sent a sheet of paper with a man drawn in the centre and a number of men and women sitting around him, to illustrate our position in the Baptist Church, with its one-man minister, which we did not like at all. When he came next to Aberlour, he was outside the camp to the Lord, and taught what he had learned from the Word. He found some of us hard to convince that our position in the Baptist denomination was wrong; but he let the Word of God speak, and it did its own work, breaking down prejudice and giving clear light on the path. The Lord greatly used his solemn, searching ministry, and the results remain in a measure to this day. When the news reached us of his home-call, we were all sad, for very few there are to speak the Word plainly and honestly as he did, and there are few who, through a long life like his, keep in harness and run well up to the end. May we be all stirred afresh to live for God, and finish our course with joy, as he was enabled to do!

By Charles Morrison, Craigellachie.

We have very pleasant recollections of the first visit of the Lord's departed servant, Mr. Ross, to the

district of Aberlour. Mr. Munro had been conducting meetings for some time, and Mr. Ross came along and spoke from 1 Cor. xiii. 12. His visit was brief, but the meetings were continued by Mr. Munro, and God did a mighty work. The whole district was moved by the power of God. While the work was in progress, and quite a number awakened, Mr. Munro had to leave, which caused much prayerful exercise among those who were being helped into a fuller knowledge of Christ, and much grief to those recently converted, for in those days there were few to help on in the Word of God the lambs of the Lord's flock.

Prayer was offered to God unceasingly that He would send some of His chosen instruments and use them for His glory. While a few believers were praying together in a house about a mile from the village, a telegram was received which ran as follows—"Ross on the way; will be with you to-night." My father, who had been in the village when it came, hurried off with the news, and, reaching the house where the children of God were assembled for prayer, he quietly opened the room door, knelt down beside the rest, and thanked God that the answer to their petitions had come. The joy of that little company was indescribable. The character of Mr. Ross's preaching was such as gave backbone to those converted under him, and a clean cut from the company of the ungodly. And not alone were his public teachings and exhortations direct and practical, but his private and personal admonitions were particularly so. How we remember the

fatherly way he would grasp our hand, look straight into our face, and ask—"How is your soul?"! We all loved him. His words were often hard upon our flesh to bear, but we knew he spoke what we needed and what God gave him.

The last time he visited Aberlour was in 1896. No sooner had he arrived and had some refreshment, than he rose and said, "I am going away for a short time," taking with him a handful of Gospel booklets and tracts. He was away for a considerable time, and on his return some one asked him where he had been. "Oh," said he, "I have been at the Muir, where we had the prayer-meeting, and where I stayed during the time of the work. It is a sacred place to me, for God was with us there in mighty power." Places where God had wrought and where His mighty arm had been made bare in the salvation of the lost were the only places of real interest to him. His pithy and pointed sayings and some of his forcible and quaint illustrations remain with us all these years.

An old lady, then unsaved, lost her spectacles one night, and she was much distressed over her loss. We had all helped in what proved to be a vain search for them, when Mr. Ross, who was there, said—"No doubt, Mrs. M—, the loss of your spectacles is a great loss to you, but not nearly so great as the loss of your soul would be." The Lord used that apt word as a means of bringing that old lady to Christ.

He was sore on believers who made no progress in the Divine life, or whom he discerned to be making

too much of the present world. "Some believers are like tatties (potatoes) growing at the back of a chest—they are so soft and tender; and others are parlour and sofa Christians—no use to God at all." We praise God for the grace bestowed upon His servant, enabling him to hold on his way and finish his course with joy in His honoured service.

By Robert Dunbar, Craigellachie.

It is over forty years since I first saw Mr. Ross; he was then in Strathdon with Mr. Fullarton, the Free Church minister, who was an earnest Gospel preacher. At that time I had no special interest in his ministry, but was attracted by his strong Highland accent. Ten years after this, I met and heard him at Rothes, where he was telling how the Lord had saved him, how happy he was for a time after he was saved, and how, whilst lying in a "box bed," he longed to be taken right away to heaven without having to witness and war down here; then how the Lord "squeezed" him out to His service, and had been "squeezing" him ever since. It was with great force and power that he told this, and it left an impression not easily effaced.

Over six years ago I came across him on the streets in Elgin giving away tracts—a service in which he was very diligent, and in which he had much confidence that God would use His own message. I went up to him and said, "You are going at it for the Lord, Mr. Ross." "Oh, just trying to disturb the devil," was his quaint reply; and it was in this light that he regarded

all such efforts. He believed that sinners are in the devil's grasp, held captive by him in peace, and that they must be disturbed and aroused. I remarked that he was looking well at his time of life; to which he made the reply, "I have a good Master."

He made some touching remarks at an Aberdeen Conference, when he was on a visit to this country from America. Telling of the Lord's goodness, and exhorting us to live for God and bear witness for Christ, he remarked, "Thank God! the big half of my life is past; indeed, life would not be worth living, were it not for the unspeakable privilege of speaking of the balmy name of Jesus." The Lord's people all around this district highly esteemed the Lord's honest servant, and many will for ever bless the Lord for his ministry in the years 1868-69-70, in and around Dufftown, Rothes, and Aberlour.

Forfar and Kirriemuir Recollections.

By Mrs. Harkins, Kirriemuir.

OUR first recollections of the Lord's departed servant are when he was in Forfar with Duncan Matheson. He was then in the North-East Coast Mission. He came along to Kirriemuir, and had dinner with us. A young sister came in, and, looking at her, he said--"You will be a believer in Christ, or what are you seeking here?" She replied that she was. "Yes," he said, "I thought you would be one of Jacob's flock and not of Laban's cattle, when you came here."

The first time he came to Kirriemuir to preach, there was a ball got up by the gentry. He wrote before coming, "Pray for me. I have no trust in my battleaxe or my bow." He arrived from Aberdeen in the same train as the musicians. The ball was a total failure; but his visit was much used of God. Many were saved, and continued brightly witnessing for the Lord for many years, and were used in leading others to the Saviour. There was a great stir in the place, and the religious people were in great wrath, because he prayed that God would "convert the sandy and sawdust elders, and fatten and take those of them who

were His to Heaven out of the way, and let the young men get scope to serve the Lord." This gave great offence to some, but it was needed. God's people were groaning under the bondage they were in under such shepherds, and felt it was the Lord's way of setting them at liberty. He was back several times, and the Lord used him much. On one occasion, when few came, and things were very dead, he said, "The Lord will have to make widows and widowers here, before there is much of a work of grace." He was here again the summer before he came outside of all denominations, and was deeply exercised. He said, "The Lord has to draw me ashore and scrape me, like an old ship, every seven years." Kirriemuir had a warm place in his heart, as it had in Duncan Matheson's; and the last time these two warriors of the Lord ever met on earth, they spoke of the work here together. He was a chosen vessel, and the Lord used him to the salvation of many, who will meet him in the glory.

A Striking Incident.

"There will be more than one Donald Ross in Heaven."

By James Murray, Glasgow.

I WILL ever remember an incident that occurred, toward the end of the "sixties," in the Kinnaird Hall, Bank Street, Dundee, at the close of a conference, where the late Donald Ross gave one of his characteristic Gospel addresses—grappling with the consciences of his audience, and dealing out, in broadcast fashion, plain, unsophisticated, seed truth.

A man of the same name, and originally from the same shire (Ross-shire), was in that meeting, more out of curiosity than anything else—as he himself put it, "just to hear his namesake preach"—and expressed a strong desire to get an introduction to Mr. Ross. Waiting for the fitting opportunity, when the many friends who had gathered around the gospel veteran—in the midst of his labours in the North-East Coast Mission—would leave him, at length I got the two together; whereupon the Dundee Donald Ross, who was naturally very communicative—perhaps somewhat egotistically loquacious, as many amongst the unsaved

are inclined to be when partially awakened and brought face to face with faithful preachers of the truth—started to tell the preacher about his parentage, what part of Ross-shire he belonged to, how and why, when a youth, he left home, and had gone to sea, some of the ports in foreign parts he had been to, and some of the wonderful sights he had seen, etc., etc.

Mr. Ross, after listening very patiently for a minute or two, quietly but firmly stopped him with the quaint remark, in broad Doric, "Freend, I hae nae doot bit ye hae seen far mair than was guid for ye tae see, an' heard mony things ye 'ad better never hae heard; an' I've little time—maybe less inclination—tae listen te a' ye hae got te tell. Let's speak for a little to God."

Reverently closing his eyes and lifting his face heavenwards, still in the same deep, broad, Norlan' accent, accompanied with the outflow of a full heart, he said—

"O God, here's a man—a namesake o' my ain, an' a countryman o' my ain—an' he's unconverted. O God, awaken, convert, an' save him! Let him see himsel' a sinner—lost, guilty, condemned, and on his way to hell! Then let him see Thy Son, Jesus Christ, on that Cross, dying for *him;* an' that'll be the greatest an' the best sicht *he's ever yet seen.* O God, answer prayer, for Jesus' sake! Amen."

Then, opening his well-thumbed Bible at the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, he read the sixth verse with great emphasis, thus—

"*All we like sheep* have *gone astray;* we have

turned *every one* to *his own way* ; and the Lord hath laid on HIM the iniquity of *us all*."

Then, looking Donald Ross the sailor straight in the face, he imploringly said, "Noo, freend, we've never met before, an' may never meet again on earth ; but if the Spirit of God should give you to see yoursel' included in that *first* "ALL," and give you to see yoursel' also inclosed in the *last* "ALL," there will be more than one Donald Ross in Heaven."

Then, taking him warmly by the hand, in his ain "hame-ower" way, and in his ain mither-tongue, he bade him a hearty "Gude-nicht!" Then, after making us promise to look after and help the ex-sailor, and a formal, hurried leave-taking, he was off.

Another Christian (now also with the Lord) and I walked slowly and quietly home with the Dundee Donald Ross, who by then had lost all his former versatility. The strong man was bowed in spirit, humbled and broken, burdened and sad. He went to his home, not to sleep, but to weep and to pray.

Next time we met him, what a change! We could read Christ in his beaming countenance and in his quiet, unobtrusive bearing, before he uttered a word ; and when he did speak—so gentle, simple, and kind, every utterance so guarded, afraid now lest he should say anything amiss—in short, in every way so unlike his former self! A man considerably over the average height, square-built, raw-boned, and muscular, curly-headed, "black but comely," having broad but well-defined features—just such as some might be inclined

to term "a very fine specimen of a formidable, gruff, and dour Highlander," but now a child of God and an heir of heaven, saved by grace—sovereign, mighty grace—having become a babe in Christ—a new creature; he was now entirely subdued, and as docile as a lamb.

The simple, faithful, business-like way our dear departed brother in Christ, Mr. Ross, had in dealing with God and with souls was very often, we do believe, productive—as in the above instance—of immediate and lasting results for eternity.

I have great pleasure in giving this small tribute to the memory of a truly good and great man, who was raised up to do a noble work for God, and whose memory will be honoured and revered by all who truly knew him for many a day and generation.

Work in the United States.

By Caleb J. Baker, Kansas City

I BELIEVE it was in the summer of 1879 that I first met our brother, Donald Ross. He, with James Goodfellow, of Canada, had pitched a tent in Chicago, on the west side, opposite Union Park. I was then engaged, four nights of the week, in a mission hall, and on the spare evenings I went to hear him preach. I remember distinctly how impressed I was with his forceful, energetic preaching and his apt illustrations, also with the fact that he was proving his points with the Word of God, which was not at all the case with the preaching that I had been listening to in other places. I became much interested immediately; but, about the middle of July, I went away on a vacation, and was gone two or three weeks. On my return I again attended the tent meetings; and one Sunday morning I went to see them remember the Lord in the breaking of bread. Brother Ross invited me to participate with them, which I did; and six or seven of us altogether remembered the Lord in this, to me, novel way.

A week or two later I became exercised about starting nightly meetings at the mission I was engaged in. We had been accustomed to do this generally about September first. But the truth I had been getting at the tent made me very loth to start on the old and, what I now saw to be, unscriptural lines. I waited on the Lord for guidance about it; and one Sunday morning the thought came to me, "Why not ask Brother Ross to take the meetings?" This suggestion seemed to me to come from God; and that very day, after the breaking of bread, I spoke to Brother Ross about taking the meetings at the mission. His reply was, "What put that into your mind?" I told him about the exercise I had passed through as to the unscriptural ministry we were getting there, and how the matter had led me to prayer; and that, while thus engaged, he had come before me as the one to be invited. He said, "It came to you on your knees, did it?" I answered "Yes." "Well," he said, "I have been asking my Father to get me some other place for meetings, as it is getting too cold here in the evenings. I will speak to Him again, and if it is His will, I will take it." I then invited him to come to dinner with me next day, so that I could show him the hall, that he might see if it would suit him. He came, and was well satisfied. It was a store, 25 by 90 feet, seated with two hundred chairs. But he said he could not come until the next Monday, as he had announced meetings in the tent for all week. This was satisfactory; but on the following day a storm blew his tent

down, so he began in the hall on Wednesday, instead of the following Monday, as he purposed. Meetings were held every night and Sunday afternoon all winter, until May 1st of the next year.

But here let me relate, as illustrating one phase of Brother Ross's manner of doing the Lord's work, that, when looking at the mission hall that day, and pronouncing it satisfactory, he asked, "What will the rent be?" I said that I would attend to that. "No," he replied; "I cannot take it unless I pay the rent." I remonstrated with him, explaining that the Lord had always given me the ability, and I should be glad to attend to that as long as He gave me the means. But he insisted on it, until I was compelled to yield somewhat. It was a new experience to me to find a preacher who would not take all he could get from any source, and I was perplexed. "Well," I said, at last, "we have a Sunday school, and you will have nothing to do with that; so I must be allowed to pay that much of the rent." So we finally settled it by his undertaking to pay fourteen dollars a month, and the balance (six dollars) I agreed to pay for the Sunday school.

I cannot forget how I enjoyed those meetings that winter, and I well remember how full of wonder and sadness I was that so few of the Christians of the city would stand the plain, unvarnished Word of God. They would come once or twice, and then turn away, except a few whose hearts the Lord touched. This was perplexing, for it was so manifestly the truth of

God. But more than mere indifference was yet to be seen by me. I was superintendent of the Sunday school, and there were about twenty teachers associated with me in the work. The majority of them were from one of the most evangelical churches in the city; and, although they did not attend Brother Ross's meetings, yet they were much opposed to them; and, about the end of the year, I was waited on at my office by a deputation of office-bearers in the church I have mentioned. They came to ask me whether "that man Donald Ross" was to continue at the mission. I told them I hoped he would. Why did they ask? Because they said the Sunday-school teachers of their church were much opposed to him, and would not work in the Sunday school if he should continue to conduct the meetings. I asked what was wrong. They said he was breaking up the churches and preaching heresy. "Well, brethren," I said, "I have been praying for two years that the Word of the Lord, and only the Word of the Lord, should be preached in that hall, and I believe the Lord has answered my prayer, and that His Word is being preached there as it is in no other place in the city. But," I added, "if you can give me a 'Thus saith the Lord' to prove that he is preaching heresy, I shall be glad to listen to you." They said they did not want any argument, and departed. Next Sunday the teachers were in their classes as usual, but, the week following, not a teacher or scholar appeared except my own family. They had made arrangements with their classes the Sunday

before to take them to another hall, and had done so.

This was a severe trial to my faith, as some of my dearest Christian friends—those that I had had sweet fellowship with since I had been converted—were among these teachers and workers—some of them much older in years and in the faith than I was. It led me, for the first time since Brother Ross had come, to seriously question my new position. Could it be possible that I alone was right, and every one of my old Christian friends wrong? For, with the departure of these teachers, the last of my former Christian friends had left me. The afternoon and evening meeting diverted my mind somewhat from this question, but Monday morning found me disconsolate and downcast over the loss of these old and good friends. I sat down to breakfast, with my Bible open before me to read as I was eating, and began to read Jeremiah xv., 19, 20—"Therefore, thus saith the Lord, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee, but return not thou to them. And I will make thee unto this people a fenced, brazen wall; and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee to save thee, and to deliver thee, saith the Lord." I need not say that this passage came home with great power to my soul that morning; and what made it more striking was that I could not remember ever having seen the passage before. It settled me completely. My

thought had been, Was it right to leave all my Christian friends, and set my judgment against theirs? And now the Word had come with its prompt answer, "If thou return, then will I bring thee again." "Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them." I saw that my position was based on the Word of God, and that I could not go back to the old unequal yoke and unscriptural position without going against God's Word, but that I was in a place where I could scripturally invite them to come with me. I have had peace and joy in the position from that day to this. And many a time I have thanked God for sending Brother Ross to Chicago with this word of truth.

When I told him (that very night, I think) about my experience with that Scripture, he related the similar experience that he had when he left the Free Church of Scotland, and came outside to the Lord, the almost identical thoughts he had about leaving and losing his old friends, and the marvellously similar Scripture the Lord gave him, but with additions fitted to his needs and conditions. His Scripture was Jeremiah i., 17-19—"Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and speak unto them all that I command thee; be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am

with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee." I do not mean, of course, that these Scriptures were the passages on which either Brother Ross or I acted in separating from the denominations; but, having obeyed the Word—for it speaks with no uncertain sound on this point—and feeling the loneliness and pain of the path, these passages came fresh from the heart of God to cheer our fainting hearts and fill them with Divine joy in the path of obedience.

About May 1st of the next year the tent was again pitched on the old site; and another summer he plodded away every night, the meetings sometimes large and sometimes very small. But it did not make much difference to him. He would preach away with the same zest if there were only two or three or a tentful of people to listen to him. He also spent much time in what he called "peddling" the Gospel—that is, going from house to house, giving tracts and notices of the meetings, and engaging the people in conversation. A familiar question when anyone came to the door was, "Are there any 'born again' people in this house?" To many this was strange and most unusual. But by this means he obtained opportunities to bring the Word of Life home to the hearts and consciences of the people.

A little later on, or perhaps about this time, he started the monthly paper for the Lord's people, "The Barley Cake" (now "Our Record"), and by-and-by a monthly for the unsaved, which he named "The Ram's Horn." Then came the Book Room, with its labour.

The work involved in all this publishing would have been labour enough for most ordinary men, but it scarcely seemed to interfere at all with the work that was dear to his heart of preaching Christ to the perishing every night, or leading on God's people, either in the city or surrounding country, or engaging in what what was most delightful of all work to him—"breaking up new prairie"—that is, going to places where the simple Gospel had not been preached. In such places he would hold two meetings each day; and they were not twenty-minute talks he gave the people either—seldom did he preach for less than an hour, and often longer. "Always abounding in the work of the Lord" was surely true of him to the day of his death. What a pattern he was in this respect! yea, and what a rebuke to many who seem to consult their own ease and comfort, and never appear to take it to heart that the most of the people are going down to a lost eternity! He was an "he goat in front of the flock" at all times, always planning some new work, some new place in which to preach the Gospel, at home in the city or in the regions beyond. As an instance of this unflagging zeal, I recall one occasion in the early days of Chicago. He came to my office one day, and suggested that we open a new hall on the north side of the city, that we had not preached the Word there yet, and the Lord had "laid it on his back" to go there, as he expressed it. I agreed that it would be a good thing, but explained that I was somewhat pushed for money just then, and could not help in it.

He said, "Dear brother, I did not come for that. The Lord has given me twenty-five dollars, and He would not give me that much ahead without expecting me to do something with it, and He has laid the north side on my back." "What!" I said; "cannot you have twenty-five dollars ahead without having to spend it?" "Never, sir, never," was his reply. I wondered at this much at the time. Here was Brother Ross, with heavy expenses—rent, printers' bills, railroad fare, car fare, etc.—and yet he cannot keep twenty-five dollars in his pocket: it must be invested for the Lord. But I ought to add, although he told me on this occasion that he had that much to spare, he never, during the twenty-four years I knew him, told me, or anyone else to my knowledge, that he lacked anything. He would say frequently, "You attend to God's things in God's way, and He will attend to yours."

Another illustration of this large-heartedness and confidence in God occurred during the second year that he was in Chicago. The meetings were being held in Union Park Hall—the rent of which, fifty dollars per month, was paid for eight months by Mr. John Creighton, at that time, and for years afterwards, a Presbyterian elder. In the fall of that year Brother Ross suggested that we hold a conference such as was held in Hamilton, Canada—the only place, I think, that had had one up to that time. The arrangement for entertainment in Hamilton was this:—The hotels of the city agreed to take a certain number of those attending the conference at a very low rate—seventy-

five cents per day—and he thought that some such arrangement might be made in Chicago. So I went around a little, but found I could not do anything of the kind—one dollar and a half was the very lowest rate I could obtain in any hotel or boarding-house fit to send the Lord's people to. This, I knew, would keep many of those in fellowship away, for they were not able to pay it. So I went to work and thought out a plan, which I submitted to Brother Ross, having told him my failure in connection with the hotels. My plan was to divide the galleries of our hall by curtains, using one side for the men and the other for the women, and put cots and bedding into them. This would do for those who could not be taken to our homes. Then, for food, my idea was to hire a cook, and do our own cooking and eating in the ante-rooms. By this method I figured that it could be done for fifty cents a day for each individual. "Oh," he said, "do it for God, man; do it for God." "Do you mean," I said, "that you would not charge anything?" "That is just what I mean," he replied. "But," I said, "this would cost about two hundred dollars for the four days." His reply was, "I never knew anything undertaken for God in God's way, but He would look after the expense. Invite everyone to come; let there be the regular collection at the breaking of bread, and let each give as the Lord may lead." This was somewhat startling to me, and I said I would have to pray and think more about it before I could decide. I did pray, and it seemed to me that it would be honouring to

God, and a great blessing to the poor of the flock, if we could arrange it so that they might feel free to come for the four days free of expense. So this plan was decided on; and, sure enough, the expenses were 199 dollars, but the collection was 204 dollars, which was a cause of much thanksgiving to God. Since then, all, or nearly all, of the numerous conferences on this western continent have been run on this plan, and always with the most satisfactory results. At the last Chicago Conference the collection was about 650 dollars, leaving, I think, about 150 dollars over expenses to be divided among the servants of the Lord. This is only one of many instances where it was manifested by dear Brother Ross that living by faith in God was to him a very great reality. His frequent reply when difficulties were suggested was, "What's that to God?" And this reality in dealing with God was seen in other ways. When there would be a good meeting, with the Word going forth in power, he would say sometimes, "I knew we were going to have a good meeting, for I had to come out of my bed in the middle of the night last night to pray for this meeting."

Many and very apt were his sayings and illustrations. One day, on meeting a doctor who had formerly attended his meetings but had dropped out, he accosted him with, "I haven't seen you at the meetings lately, doctor. Where have you been?" "No," was the answer; "I don't believe in your preaching." "What don't you believe, please?" was the next question. "Oh," said the doctor, "you believe in the per-

severance of the saints, and I don't believe any such thing." "I am sure I don't," replied Brother Ross. "I believe in the perseverance of God with His saints, but I never believed in the perseverance of the saints."

On another occasion he was preaching on the text, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." To illustrate worshipping in the flesh as contrasted with worship in the Spirit, he told how a friend once took him through a large building in Boston, where, amongst other things, he was shown a horse walking on a treadmill. "And," said he, "I asked my friend, 'What is the poor beastie doing there working on that treadmill?' 'Oh,' replied my friend, 'there is a church next door, and this horse is pumping wind into the organ.' Then I learned that the poor horse was pumping worship into the organ, and a man on the other side was letting it out with his fingers."

I will give one more incident that illustrates his aptness to meet individual cases and his insight into the need of men he met. He came to call on me one day at my office. One of our salesmen, a pompous, talkative, self-satisfied Englishman, who did not know him, took him for a customer. Walking up to him in his blandest manner, and with a pompous bow, he said, "Well, sir, what can I do for you?" Brother Ross looked him up and down, and then quietly observed, "Well, if you are converted, you can pray for me." Those who witnessed it say they never saw a man more confused. He was a member of the Episcopal

Church; but it seemed, as Brother Ross himself would have put it, "to take all the wind out of his sails" to meet such a request in such a place and manner.

* * * * * *

In the going home of our dear brother, this country has sustained a great loss. That tireless energy was sustained to the last, as was witnessed by his going to Savannah this winter to preach the Gospel, against the protestations of his friends. "It will be a great honour," he would say, "to die preaching Christ. But," he would add, "I am not looking for death. I am not looking for the undertaker; I am looking for the Uppertaker."

By W. L. Faulknor, Pomona, California.

It was in the year 1900 that our departed brother, Mr. Ross, visited the Pacific coast. I had the privilege and pleasure of seeing and hearing a good deal of him at that time, and was truly helped and refreshed by his ministry. In reply to an invitation to make our house his home while in Southern California, he wrote, "I need not tell you how our old hearts were refreshed by your cordial invitation. You are well aware that our time to leave this world for our *own country* is nearing. Then it will be home." He visited many places, and was wonderfully helped of God in preaching and teaching the truth. On returning to Los Angelos, he wrote, "I am going to have all this week in Gospel Hall on your chart—a new experience to me." He referred to the use of a chart being a new

experience, for his work as a pioneer was chiefly in new fields, preaching the Gospel to the unconverted. He was no "lecturer" on religious subjects, and had little patience with those who make it their chief work to go from place to place delivering a set of prepared addresses. Writing from a city in the Western States, he says, "First meeting here to-night. Six adults and fifteen children; and it was dry—oh, how dry! There is a Christian here that I know. Last night he was going to make his *debut* as a preacher. He had it all written out; he could not even say a decent prayer. It would seem God confounded him. What a humbling! To-day he was telling me he felt as if he ought to be nailed up in a dry-goods box, and dispatched to the ends of the earth. I was telling him it was only the beginning of his education." Writing of a Conference, he says, "It was the best for ten years, and sometimes the Word was in the great power of God; at other times it smelt of the midnight lamp and of man's intellect. What is the use of man's analysis of God's Word?" In his last letter, he writes, "Thank God, we are not 'the smart set' of New York, but the redeemed of the Lord! Our emancipation is drawing nigh. I congratulate you on your prospects."

Canadian Recollections

By T. D. W. Muir, Detroit, U.S.A.

I SHALL never forget the first time I heard Mr. Ross. It was, if I remember aright, at the first conference held in Hamilton, Ontario, or, for that matter, among the assemblies gathered to the Name of the Lord on this side of the water. The date was, I think, New Year, 1877. We had been waiting on God for some time that morning, seeking His guidance in the ministry of the Word of God, when suddenly the silence was broken by a voice in the audience saying, "Children, have ye any meat?" And then we saw a kindly-faced man, with large, flowing beard, step forward, and speak unto us words from the twenty-first chapter of John, that stirred our consciences and ravished our hearts. Many who were at that conference have gone home to the glory since then, but many are still with us, and there are few of them who heard those words that have ever forgotten them. The savour of them lives still.

Personally, I have cause to remember that time for

another reason. At the close of the meetings, Mr. Ross came to me, and, after a little conversation, in which he inquired regarding some meetings I had tried to conduct in one or two country districts, he asked me if I would go with him to Galt, and, as he put it, "be John Mark to me." Guessing that he had reference to Acts xii., 25 and xiii., 5—where we read of Barnabas and Saul taking John with them as their minister or attendant—I was only too glad to fall in with his desire, as I felt it would not only be an honour to accompany such an one in the work, but that here was an opportunity to get help in the things of God such as I realised I very much needed.

I replied that I would be glad to go with him, if he thought I could be of any use to him—providing he would agree to one thing. I told him I had, without any intention on my part, been pressed into a sphere of service for which I felt myself to be, in a great measure, unfitted; and that, especially in connection with the exposition of Scripture, would he be willing to take the trouble to listen to anything I might say in the meetings, and then, when we got alone, criticise anything he detected in my manner or matter that would hinder, or, at least, *might* hinder, the reception of my message?

The request seemed to please him, and the compact was made. A day or two later we went to Galt, and, still later, to Clyde, there to enjoy together a time of—to me, at least—never-to-be-forgotten fellowship. Oh, the patience with which he would go over the

Scriptures with me! It was customary for us to spend at least an hour in our bedroom, before retiring, talking over the Word. Faulty expositions of certain texts, or faulty expressions of what was in itself truth, all passed in review, with the result that help was given at that time that has not been forgotten until this day.

Himself an active man, he could not bear to see others who were professedly devoting their time to the Lord's service idle. Both by example and in the course of his ministry he condemned it. Yet he never thought it mis-spent time that was used over the Word of God. Indeed, he encouraged close study of the Bible. "Take time to study God's Word," he would in those days say to me; "use all legitimate means to enable you to grasp the scope of it. Examine the context; secure, if possible, the primary application; then, as you meditate upon it, you may find there are principles in it of wider application, which will come to the front as you may need to use them."

To emphasise such instruction, he would give me portions to study and "work out," as he called it. In leisure moments these "studies" would be gone over and criticised, to my great profit. I shall never forget those days, nor cease to thank God for the help given during the eight weeks we were together. And in the years that have followed since those early days, how much I have been indebted to him for wise counsel, encouraging words, and, by means of his public ministry, searching messages, stirring up my lagging

energies to desire, in some measure, more real devotedness to Him we own as Lord and Master.

And I may say I am only one of many who would gladly bear testimony to their indebtedness to our dear brother. In two ways especially was this help given: first, by his godly example; second, by his stirring ministry. An evangelist himself of the pioneer type, he was untiring and persistent in his efforts to reach the unconverted. Even after old age, and the many infirmities peculiar to it, had come upon him, he pressed on into new or neglected places with the Gospel. Often have we heard the remark made: "Well, dear Brother Ross puts us younger men to shame by his example!" There is no doubt that this example has stimulated the flagging energies of many a younger servant of the Lord, and kept alive in them the desire to "preach the Gospel in the regions beyond" them. And he stood ever ready with kindly word or pithy saying to speed such on in their efforts. And it was not only in words he shewed his sympathy, but in a practical way he sought to cheer the lonely young labourer on. Sometimes a liberal bundle of Gospel tracts, or maybe a few dollars to help to pay the expenses, accompanied by one of his short characteristic letters, were the means by which he sought to bid them God-speed.

And the peculiar stirring stamp of his unique ministry! It is fitly described in Ecclesiastes xii. 11—"The words of the wise are *as goads*, and as *nails* fastened by the master of assemblies, which are given

from one shepherd." Hating sham and unreality, his messages were oft-times scathing in their rebuke of such things; but, on the other hand, when urging upon his hearers the grand reality of having to do with the "living and eternal God," as he delighted to call Him, his words were tender, and the moistened eye told of the tender feelings within him. To all it was evident he was not delivering some well-studied, oft-repeated address, but delivering, as God's messenger, a message from God—a message that served the double purpose of bringing all into God's presence and of acting as a goad, to stir up God's servants to take hold on God with deeper purpose of heart; a message that made one feel small—despicably small, sometimes—but created within them a deeper sense of their need of God. In this way our dear brother was a help to all young men who had a heart to preach the Gospel; and by none will his stimulating words be missed more than by them.

And the ranks are thinning fast. The old men who have borne the burden and heat of the day are leaving us one by one. Where are the young men who are being raised up to fill their places? Where are the Donald Rosses who are seeking to stimulate the young men whose hearts God may be exercising? Oh, the need here at this point! May our God come in, and in His own way revive His work in our souls, and give men who, by precept and example, will be helps to the younger! And may He raise up and thrust forth young men, to whom He has given grace and gift, to

press into the many needy places all about us, where they may seek in their measure to "preach the Gospel to every creature."

By John Rae, Brandon.

I had the privilege of knowing and having much true fellowship with Mr. Ross, first in the old country and again on this side of the Atlantic. I praise God for all that He used him to minister both by his words and his example for my spiritual help. His counsel was most valuable, and always safe.

When my dear wife and I were exercised about going to America, he visited us at New Deer, Aberdeenshire. It had been suggested to me by one who had gone to reside in a large city on this side that it would be a good centre for us, and that we might pitch our tent there. "No doubt," he said, "that is a needy city, but there is one there already, whereas there are scores of cities and whole States and provinces with nobody preaching the whole truth, where you might go and have a whole State or province all to yourself under your nose." This led us to still lay the matter before God, who guided us to Manitoba and the great North-West, where we had more than one province, with unlimited boundary on either side. For months after we landed there we did not meet one of whom we could speak of assuredly as truly "born again." How we longed for Christian fellowship! Even in that barren wilderness the God of all grace came to us and saved a dear farmer and his wife. They were the first fruits of the Gospel in Manitoba,

and oh, they were precious to us! After a time, being still alone as regards a fellow-labourer, I took the long journey of about one thousand miles to attend the Chicago Conference, and there I met Mr. Ross and other servants of the Lord, and had sweet fellowship in the things of God.

I asked him—"If ever we have a Conference in lone Manitoba, will you come over and help us?" In his quaint, hearty way, he quickly replied—"Yes; I'll scrape the nickels and cents together, and come and see you." It was not so very long till we had our first Conference, and, true to his promise, he was there. It was a good Conference. God was there, and spoke through His servants. The work has grown, and Conferences have since been frequently held at Brandon and elsewhere, at which he has been, and greatly helped us by his godly and always practical ministry, thawing our cold hearts and bringing us nearer to God.

On one occasion, when he was leaving us, he said to my dear wife, "Keep your house open for God; it pays." My beloved wife—my long-loaned partner of forty years of wilderness life—was taken home on February 12th, and our aged and beloved brother, Mr. Ross, the following day.

"Soon we shall join them, see Him with these eyes,
Sing Hallelujahs, triumphant in the skies:
He will be with us who loved us long before,
And Jesus, precious Jesus, is ours for evermore."

His last letter to me is characteristic of the man. I prize it much. After mentioning my dear wife's

illness, he says—"Reading between the lines, I see you expect her to go home this time, and thus leave you in the wilderness for a little longer. It will not be very long in any case. HE IS COMING, or surely we go very soon. All is well anyway. The Lord give her journeying mercies and you staying mercies. My little heart is drawn out for you all, that He may meet your every need, rebuke a cunning devil, and keep you safe, leaning on His own blessed arms."

Now they have met in the presence of the Lord, while we are left a little while as "pilgrims in the land."

What a good ending he had, preaching Christ to the last, and grand was his entrance to the immediate presence of the Lord whom he loved and served.

May we who remain in the wilderness a little longer be filled with the same spirit of devotedness to God, and hasten on to the day when everyone shall receive his reward according to his own labour.

Closing Days of Service in Savannah.

By Louis Steven, Savannah.

OUR beloved brother, Mr. Donald Ross, arrived in Savannah on December 5th, 1902, and immediately was "about his Father's business." His days from then until he was seized with the illness that carried him home, were filled up with diligent service for the Lord, spreading the Gospel. His mornings were spent alone. Each afternoon he spent giving away tracts and speaking to old and young, black and white, on the streets, in the depots, and on the wharf, about eternal things. He never missed an opportunity of testifying for Christ. For about a year a Sunday school and Gospel meeting had been carried on among a number of factory workers and others in a suburb. He very heartily threw in his energies to this little service, speaking the Word with great plainness and faithfulness, and the people became much interested, and the Lord saved some. The Christians who attended greatly enjoyed his ministry, and deeply mourned when he was taken home. We will ever re-

member some of his words at the Lord's Day morning meetings for worship; they were full of Christ, and always fitted in with what the Spirit had been bringing before us. On one of the last mornings we were together, his word was on "They saw God, and did eat and drink" (Exod. xxiv. 11). How sweet and solemn it was! At a Bible reading (I think one of the last he was present at), he remarked that Moses' long life of a hundred and twenty years was made up of three "forties." The first forty in learning the wisdom of Egypt; the second forty alone with God in the backside of the desert, unlearning and vomiting it all up again; and the last forty "Moses the man of God," acting with and for God among a backsliding people.

Amongst those whom the Lord had saved were a few young lads, in whom he took a real interest. Speaking in the meeting one night, in his quaint, homely way, he said, "Are you praying that other boys—your workmates—may be saved?" One of the lads answered, "Yes." "What do you think a farmer would do if he wanted to raise a crop of wheat? Would he just kneel down in his field and say, 'Lord, give me a crop of wheat?'" "No, no," answered the lads, who were getting greatly interested. "What then?" he asked. "Buy seed, and sow it," said one of the lads. "Right, my lad! that's right. And you had better be sowing too, if you want to see your workmates saved. Sow the seed of the Word, and always keep it in your pocket, where it will be handy," said Mr. Ross, at the same time pulling from his pocket

a copy of the Testament. At the close of the meetings the lads gathered around, and asked me to get them each a small Testament; and, as a result, nine are now carried daily, and carefully read and studied. Some of these lads tell how, on the last evening he was able to be out—two days before he was taken ill—he lingered with them at the close of the meeting, shook hands with, and gave a word of counsel to each, saying to all, "Good-bye, lads; if we never meet on earth, we shall in Heaven." Dear aged servant of Christ, how we all loved him, and how we miss him! The full fruit of his labours among these simple people, to whom he so earnestly and plainly set forth Christ, will only be known at the Judgment-seat. He suffered much, but was very patient. One day he said to me, "Ah, brother, our sufferings and troubles may not only be for our own discipline and good; God has other purposes to fulfil. He wants to show to the principalities and powers in heavenly places what His grace can do for men." Then he lifted his Bible and read Eph. iii. 10, remarking, "Yes; that is it. God wants to let them see what His grace can do for us, even in the midst of trouble." He was made the means of much help and blessing to us, and we shall ever thank God for the closing days of his ministry among us in Savannah.

Echoes from the Borderland.

TO SAINTS IN BERVIE, SCOTLAND.

IN the days of his connection with the North-East Coast Mission, Mr. Ross was much in Bervie, and the Lord used him to the conversion of many. He was only once here after, but we heard from him sometimes, and all loved him much. The following extracts from his last letters are very touching:—

"I have to leave Scotland and return to the Far West by the steamer 'Sicilian,' sailing from Glasgow. The continuous rain and cold make it hard on my poor old body, so have to leave in a hurry. I am disappointed, for I counted on the privilege of seeing many of the dear old saints with whom I often took sweet counsel in the things of God. However, the Lord knows best, and, if I never get across again, we will all meet at THE TOP, and will be at the great Coronation of the King of kings. Give my love to all the saints. Tell them to walk worthy of God, as dear children. The time is short. Never forget that Christ gave His life for His enemies, so ought we to

give our lives for one another. I return to lay aside my tabernacle and leave it with the undertaker. I go to the Uppertaker, and am happy at the prospect of being absent from the body and present with the Lord. Good-bye. Pray for me."

TO AN EVANGELIST IN CANADA.

"You will be surprised at getting a note from me from Savannah. The whole truth is, as my pilgrimage is nearing its end, I came here for two special reasons—(1) To do a little work in opening new ground for the Lord, and (2) to escape the rigours of the Chicago winter. I cannot stand the cold at all; it makes me very sick. So have begun meetings, and get a little hearing. The city is in a deplorable condition, and nobody seems to have grit enough for anything natural or spiritual. If the country is ever to be opened up for God, it will have to be done by foreigners. The people are too lazy, helpless, and useless for anything. They postpone everything; punctuality is a lost virtue. D.V., I expect to remain for some little time, and keep at it if my strength continues. Two-thirds of the people here are coloured, in various hues, from the pale to the deep blue black. They have churches but no Gospel that I can hear of. They have no Bibles—no God. We send missionaries to Africa; there is room here for a hundred Gospellers for twenty years—I mean in the Southern States. O that God would send them."

TO ROBERT MUNRO, FOREST, ONTARIO.

This would probably be one of the last letters he wrote. It is dated February 9th, four days before he was called home. The writing shows how feeble he must have been, yet strong in spirit and full of spiritual freshness and vigour to the end.

"I came here in December, the weather compelling me to leave Chicago. I knew no one here, and do not know many yet. But I went at the work, with four meetings, with no helper. I believe there are young converts to the number of seven; three of them are in the assembly already. Four boys claim to be saved, a husband and wife, and a young man about twenty-three. The meetings were never large, but it was very pleasant to me to see the dear boys searching their Bibles, which we had to get for them. They never had a Bible before. The Lord bless and keep them.

"I have had two operations, and I tell you it makes me wish I was in the country that I call my own. I scarcely think I will preach any more. I thought I might continue till I was called, but He doeth all things well—'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits which He hath bestowed on thee.'"

In Memoriam: Donald Ross.

"Valiant in fight" (Heb. xi., 34).

LIKE as the SUN from *East* to *West* doth run,
So was *thy* shining in this world below—
First in the Eastern, then the Western spheres,
For more than three-score out of four-score years!
As *pioneer*, prince in that art wert thou;
Not building on foundations others laid,
But "*breaking up new ground*" in virgin soil
In which to sow the seed with faith and prayer.
Like as a *lion* thou didst face the *foe*,
Yet lamb-like with God's flock thou didst appear
With shepherd's heart for all the blood-bought sheep.
Well we remember how thy *faith* in GOD
Waxed strong, as thou triumphantly didst cry—
"What's *that* to GOD?"—when difficulties came!
And when, as age increased, thy friends said, "Rest;
Come, *settle down* and take thy rest below,"
Thy voice rang out in tones which echo still—
"No; never 'settle *down!*' 'tis *up* I go,
To *settle* '*up*' with HIM before the throne;
His *servant* will not rest where HE had none!"

Thus didst thou die in harness, and hast risen
To *settle up* above, "*with* CHRIST" in Heaven!
"O, valiant warrior, welcome, welcome home;
Well hast thou fought the fight, with shield of faith
Quenching the fiery darts, and buckling on
The Spirit's two-edged sword 'gainst self and sin:
The helmet of salvation on thy head,
And feet well shod with God's own gospel—'Peace,
Peace through the blood' CHRIST shed on Calvary.
(For peace through other means can ne'er be made.)
Thus ran thy feet through all the paths of life,
Till now they tread with us the peaceful shore."
Such would thy welcome be within the gates,
Whose pearl-built portals thou hast passed within,
And gained "abundant entrance" into bliss.

M. M. DAVIS.

IVY BANK, LEOMINSTER.

[As we go to press, tidings come of the home-call of the writer of the above "Memoriam." Long an invalid, she has now entered into that "bliss" which she mentions in the last line of her verses.]

Weighty Words and Pithy Sayings

FROM THE

MINISTRY OF THE LATE DONALD ROSS.

GRACE does not run in the blood, though it may often run in the line.

What I got over sixty years ago was not religion, but Christ; and what I have is in its tendencies like the flame, ever upward.

God has given to all, who receive His Christ, eternal life: it will neither drown, burn, nor kill. All who have it have it for ever.

There was only one way that Noah could get out of the Ark—that was out at the top. So we who are saved will yet go up. The only way we can cease to be saints on earth, is to go up to be saints in Heaven.

The believer is as safe now, though not as comfortable, as he will be in Heaven.

No believer will make progress in his spiritual life, save as he day by day deals with the eternal God.

Disappointments are good things for us when they come from the Lord.

A household without prayer is like a house without a roof, open to all the elements.

Consecration simply means that you and all you have belong to God. Every beat of your pulse, every throb of your heart, every penny in your purse is His.

Unbelief always locks up God's cupboard, but faith takes the key of God's Word, and, unlocking it, finds that God is unchanged and still for us.

Evil speaking is an unmixed evil. It defiles the inventor of it, the hearer of it, and the repeater of it.

It is a well-known fact that there are those who neglect their own affairs, but have an insatiable yearning after meddling with those of others. Such "clips" and "gossips" are a curse to any community.

In all matters go by the written Word of God. If you have no relish for the Word of God, you are a backslider.

In these times, the devil is moving man through his pride to set aside the Word of God, and substitute for it wrecked human reason.

Many are busily engaged squeezing into God's truth some fanciful meaning of their own, and then manifest their wonderful powers of teaching by squeezing out what they themselves put in, instead of trembling at the Word of the Lord.

Carnal believers will not endure the sound and healthy teaching of God's Word spoken in the Holy Ghost. They will rather run after the flattering, flash-in-the-pan talk of popular preachers, who take care not to touch their consciences. And as long as they pay for such garbage, they will get plenty of it.

Some assemblies of believers, which are continu-

ally hearing pleasant things and pandered to by their leaders, are like a pretty keepsake covered with a glass shade only to be admired. They are of no use whatever for God.

Unless assemblies do God's will, the devil will give them plenty of work, which they must do for their very existence.

It pays to keep on good terms with the eternal God. Be right with God in your own soul first; there can be nothing right if that be wrong.

While some Christians are talking about work, others are doing it.

We can all stand hearing the unconverted warned, but we do not always like to have the Word applied to ourselves.

The reason why preachers lose their grip of the people is, because they lose their grip of God. Get back to God, and you will soon get the people.

Going to a strange place with the bare Word of God would not cost us a thought, but we hesitate in going where there are cold and carnal Christians, their covetous, worldly lives often proving a great hindrance to the Gospel.

We ought to preach Christ, first for His own sake, that He may be glorified; next for the people's sake, that they may be saved; and do it continuously, clearly, firmly, and tenderly, always and wherever the opportunity presents itself.

Let us take God's Word as we find it, and thus save ourselves much speculation and "imaginative

theology," which is a most successful device of the devil to lead away from the simplicity that is in Christ.

The most of Christians seem to settle down into money-making schemes for their own supposed profit, as if the chief end of man was to have and enjoy personal comforts.

There is a class of preachers who expect to live by the goodwill of Christians, and are simply loafers.

If any servant of the Lord sent by the Lord Himself gives himself wholly to the Lord's work, He will assuredly take care of him. If he is not taken care of in this sphere of work, he ought to conclude he is out of the Lord's leading, and cry—Halt!

The Lord's servants ought not to be supported on the principle of charity, but because they are the servants of Christ.

The greatest hindrance to the spread of God's Gospel, and the most powerful instruments for evil the devil has, are ungodly preachers who are in the preaching business for the money that is in it.

It may be safely asserted that the greater part of the popular preachers of the times are not born again, or God-made ministers at all. They are in the business for money only, and when they see their craft in danger, by others preaching for the love of Christ and of souls, they oppose and talk against the preachers and the work. No wonder infidels are on the increase!

If all who are saved should at once repudiate all sects, take the Word of God alone as their guide, and

go by it, many of the unconverted would undoubtedly be undeceived. The Gospel would be preached outside, not with unholy embellishments as at present, but in the power of the Holy Ghost. Sinners would be aroused out of their sleep in sin, and led to see the difference between man's devisings and God's once-given faith to the saints.

Assemblies of believers take their character largely from their first Gospel preachers. The converts generally imitate the preachers, and the more excellent these are, the greater and more general the imitation of them is, in both their good and evil ways and manners.

Christ preached in the Holy Ghost is always followed by results. Apart from the power of the Spirit there can be no real conversions, neither by eloquence, clear reasoning, nor sound theology. True conversion is effected by the preaching of Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost. Let all God's preachers remember this.

There is a vast difference between God's truth and God's message, and there is an equal difference between the activities of the human brain and the activities of the Holy Ghost upon a preacher while he is preaching.

The spiritual condition of the preacher is of the first importance. If this is wrong, nothing is right. His words may be clear and clever, there may be well-rounded sentences and bursts of eloquence, or the feelings of the hearers may be wrought upon by

touching stories, but if the preacher is not in the Holy Ghost, all that he says is worthless to do God's work. It is alike useless to man and beast.

If the preacher is to be used of God, he must be at the Spirit's disposal altogether and right along. If one is to be a successful tool for the devil, he must be entirely given over to him, as we read of some who "sold themselves to do evil" (1 Kings xxi. 20-25). It is a possession. And if I am to be a fit instrument for the Holy Spirit, I must give myself entirely over to Him. This also is a possession: it is being filled with the Spirit; and when such an one opens his mouth to speak, it is felt that GOD is in what he says. O for a number of such preachers!

Cold, formal essays, concocted in the world of books and repeated from memory, are of no blessing to anybody. Neither are second-hand truths heard from other preachers and treasured up until a suitable occasion is given to fire them off.

Persons familiar with this kind of cold, theoretic preaching are usually the most difficult of all to reach in their consciences. The ungodly who constantly listen to such preaching are usually the very last to be reached in a work of grace, and many of them are never reached at all. They know the thing in theory, and seem quite content with themselves, while all the time they are unregenerate. They have never been born again.

Believers fed on dry doctrine taught them by equally dry preachers, have the tendency to become

antinomians—revelling in doctrines and living in sin.

Preachers living in the presence of God and preaching in the power of the Holy Ghost need no other influence. They can face the devil and cope with his power without the patronage of the religious world, or even of cold and carnal Christians.

Many of God's dear people are quite content if they have the assurance that they will get to Heaven by-and-bye. But it is one thing to go crawling along the road like a snail and quite another to go flying as on eagle's wings.

The whole of the infinite resources of the eternal God are for us and at our disposal, so that instead of being weak and easily swayed by the things around us, we ought to move and sway everything for God.

It is an unspeakable honour to be allowed to suffer shame for the Lord Jesus. Paul had no greater honour till he went to Heaven than when he was let down from a window in a creel at Damascus.

What is popular now will be of very little value at the judgment seat of Christ, and what is little valued now will be richly rewarded then. The tables will be turned exactly. It is a great matter to be in God's way of reckoning here and now. It is the only thing that will come out as true gold hereafter.

It is only by sacrificing the truth and character of God that His Word can be made popular to an ungodly world. When His Christ was here, although His every act and word was perfect, the world hated

and at last murdered Him. Do you think that you are wiser than He was, or that you will succeed in conciliating the world that hated Him?

Earth is quickly passing away, and we are but strangers in it. This is not our home. Our home is up there. We sometimes sing—

> "Home, home is nearing,
> 'Tis coming into view."

How little any of us realise it, but it is true nevertheless. We are only pilgrims passing through an enemy's country; Heaven is our own country; our citizenship, our politics, are up there. When God's people lose sight of this, they become like hogs grovelling in the dust and dirt of earth.

The highest truth I know, or ever expect to know, is contained in these words:—"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

We will go up in a moment when the Lord comes, and I would just like to have time to shout, "CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY."

Funeral Address

By Judge Gillett, of Valparaiso.

IF Mr. Ross had a voice in the management of this service, he would say, Don't speak so much about me as about my Lord and Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His wondrous salvation. So to be consistent with what we know to be the wishes of the departed one, what we shall say will be as far as we are able along these lines.

It is generally the custom at such a time to eulogize the one who has been taken away, but I am not at all fitted for this kind of business. However, we may speak a few words of a reminiscent character, which was the thought suggested when we were invited to say a few words at this time. I suppose, indeed, I was asked to speak, not because of any ability for occasions like these, but because I was the first man in this western country with whom Mr. Ross became acquainted when he came here from Canada about twenty-five years ago. He came to Valparaiso, Ind., and stayed at my house, and the friendship which then began has been maintained with pleasure and profit

until now. Death has come in and broken it for a while. But you all know what territory he has covered in his labours since then.

Very often at a funeral the will is opened and read, and I presume many of you have seen this done. Well, I want to open and read a little from one of Mr. Ross's wills. This old Bible I hold in my hand is literally that, for Mr. Ross gave it to my wife twenty-three years ago. The last occasion on which it was used by him publicly was at the funeral of Mrs. Dorr of Valparaiso, mother of Mrs. Holabird and Mrs. Donald Munro, and the next time it is used publicly is now at his own funeral service.

The Scripture that came to my mind very soon after I received the news of Mr. Ross' death was one that was particularly connected with an incident in his life in the early days of my acquaintance with him. The incident was this. After spending a midsummer siege at Crown Point, Ind., in the Gospel, with a tent, he contracted chills and fever. He came to Valparaiso for relief and change, and, as usual, came to my house. When he came in, he was right in the throes of a genuine Indiana chill, and if any of you ever had one, you understand it better than I can tell you what it is. Well, the first words he spoke when he came in were the words that came to me when I heard he had gone to be with the Lord. Let us read them; they will be found in 1 Thess. v. 18: "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you." And he added, "This is what God

says, 'In everything give thanks,' not in some things, but in everything." So when I heard that Mr. Ross had gone home, while I felt sad, yet the words came, "In everything give thanks," and although it must be a very sad occasion to the loved ones left behind, still there are reasons why we and they too should give thanks. Let us look at some of the reasons.

Turn first to Phil. i. 21, "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain." Now, we all know to what extent the first part of this verse was true, both of the Apostle Paul and Mr. Ross, but the last part is equally true—"To die is gain"—gain, I say, for them and every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. By dying, Mr. Ross is the gainer, for he is with the Lord—"to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." And if our Lord Jesus Christ should come this afternoon, he would in body rise before us, as 1 Thess. iv. 16-17 says, "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up, together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Then, again, his pilgrim journey is ended, and there is no more pain for him. He has passed through the physical suffering of death and is done with that. Many of us who know well that we are safe as far as our souls are concerned, shrink from the physical throes of dissolution. He is past that; there is no more the dark valley for him, nor sickness nor pain, nor the dread of these things.

Now, read another passage. In 2 Cor. v. 6-8 we have, "Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith and not by sight:) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." In this old Bible I notice that Mr. Ross has underlined the word "confident" in both verses, so as to emphasize it. He was both sure of it and satisfied with it, and I see he has added a foot-note to give a better reading, "While we are at home in the body we are from home with the Lord, and willing to be from home out of the body, and to be at home with the Lord." True enough, he is not enjoying the full glory yet; he will enter into that when Jesus comes. Blessed prospect for the child of God, living or dead!

Another word in Heb. x. 37, "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Here again I notice Mr. Ross has made a little change. He has underlined the whole verse, and added a word to improve the translation, and this is how it reads: "For yet a VERY little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." So it is not only a little while until Jesus comes, but a very little while. What a source of comfort not only to those who have loved ones gone before, but also to us who are listening for that shout to come up higher, as some of us have been doing for the last twenty-five years. Just a very little while, and then a grand reunion.

Now, read in Heb. xi. 22, "By faith, Joseph, when

he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones." Now, that was faith in the glory. He knew that his people were not always to remain down in Egypt, but that they should certainly be in the promised land. Let us see exactly what he said. It is recorded in Genesis l. 24: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die, and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." He did not want his bones to remain in the land of Egypt; he desired that they should share in the promised deliverance of God, and the glory of the land of Canaan. You see he lived and he died in the anticipation of that glory. And so ought we. It is not the land of Canaan, but the eternal glory to be ours at the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. Living or dying, this is our proper prospect and hope.

The parting with loved ones is only for a very little while. They sleep in Jesus. The wilderness journey is only for a very little while longer, and then will come everlasting glory with our Lord Jesus Christ. So with this grand prospect before us, though things now may seem dark, we should "in everything give thanks."

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